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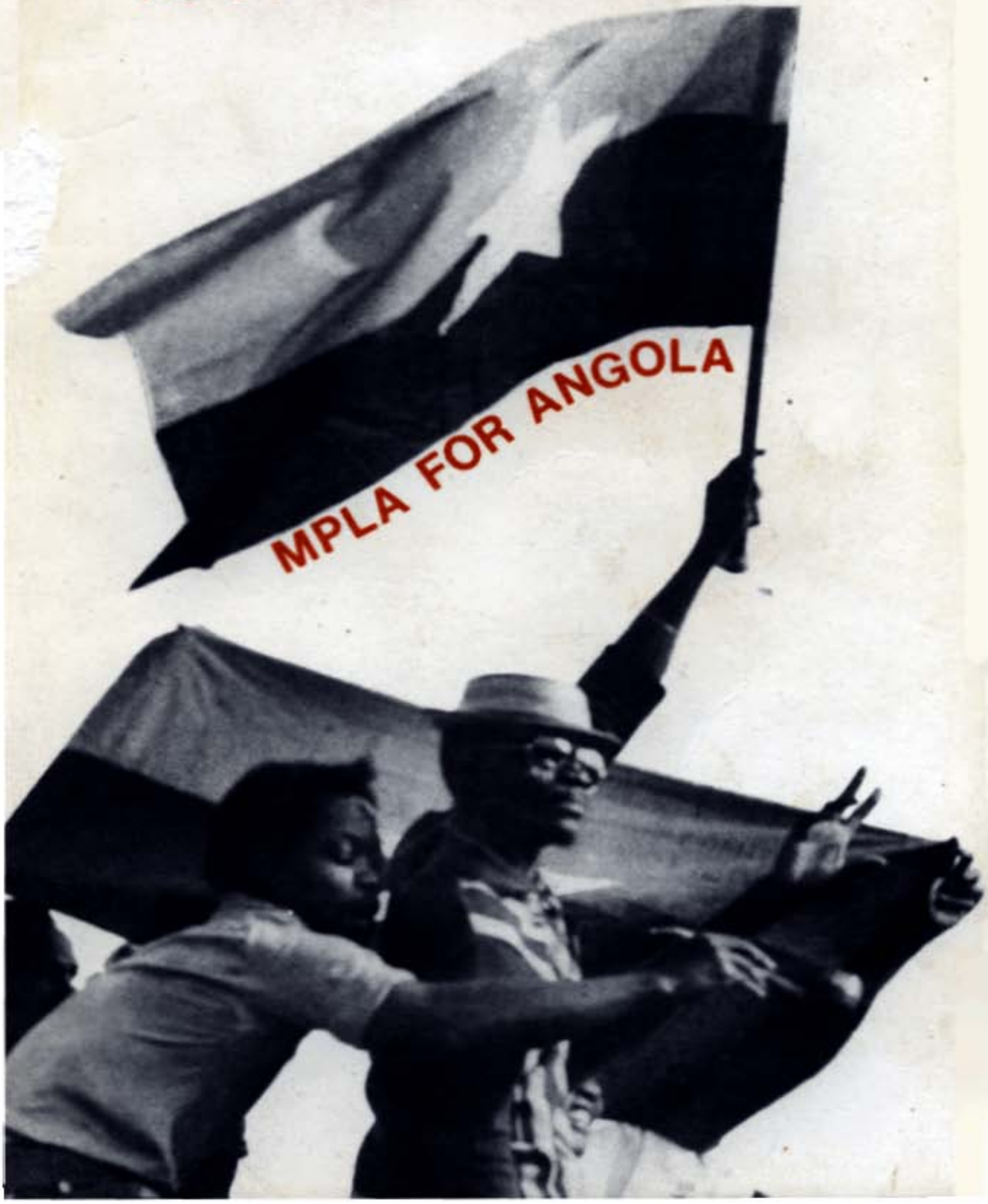

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Cover Picture: **MPLA supporters hoist their flag on independence day**

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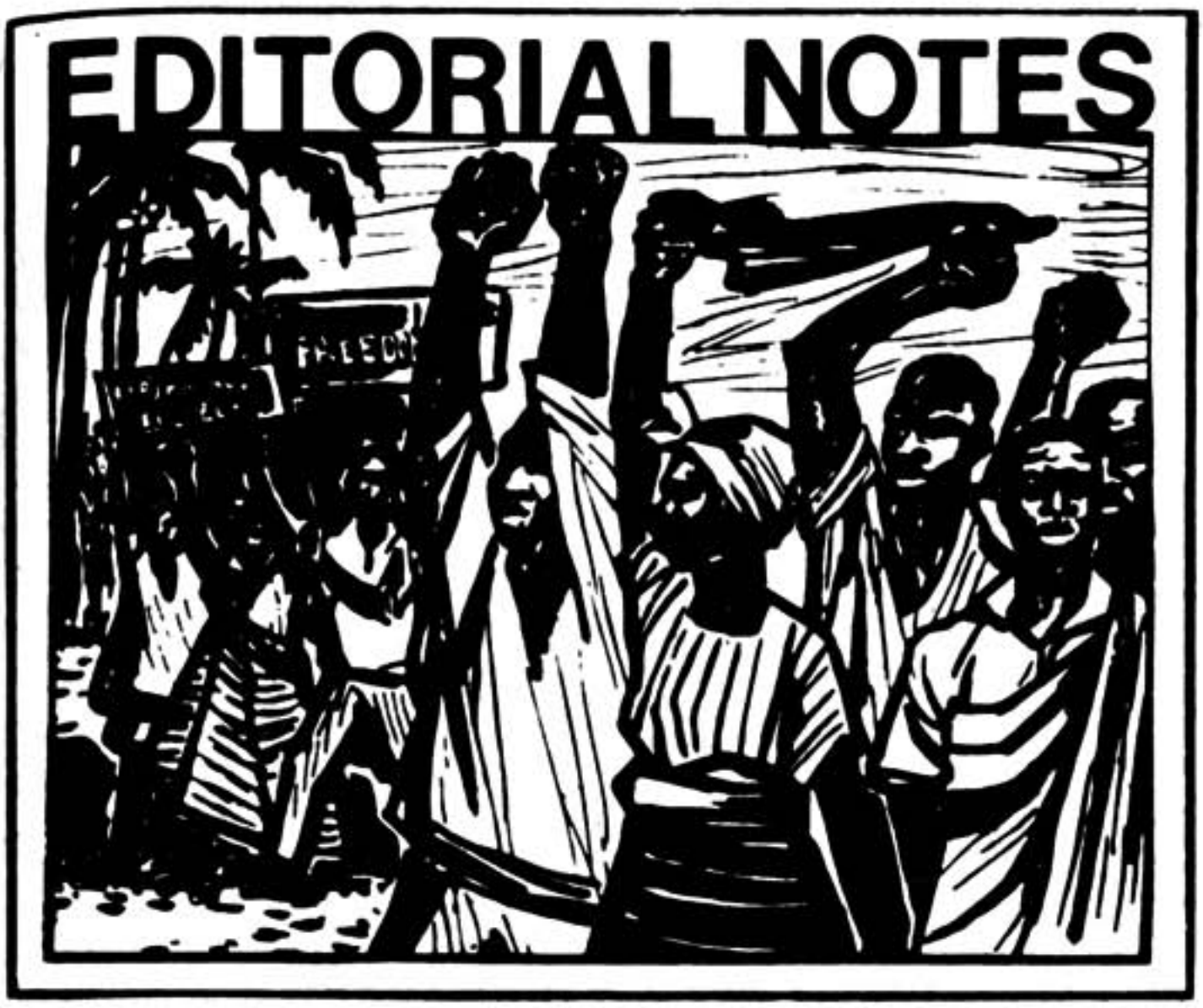

NO NEUTRALITY IN ANGOLA

The birth of independent Angola on November 11 saw the newly-installed MPLA Government headed by President Agostinho Neto gravely threatened by attack from both north and south. From the north the troops of FNLA, reinforced by Zaire and financed and equipped by the United States, were reported to be almost within artillery range of Luanda, the capital. From the south a mercenary-led force supported by South Africa and equipped with armoured vehicles and helicopters had captured the towns of Sa da Bandeiro, Mocamedes,

Benguela and Lobito and, in association with UNITA elements, had worked its way to within 200 miles of Luanda. The oil-rich enclave of Cabinda had been invaded by troops from Zaire, although MPLA was still firmly entrenched there. All the indications were that a period of intense conflict lay ahead.

Portugal withdrew from Angola refusing to hand over power to MPLA, claiming that it was not in a position to differentiate between the three liberation movements laying claim to Angola – a stand also adopted by President Amin of Uganda in the name of the Organisation of African Unity. The fact is, however, that the fight in Angola was not over which of three equally-matched organisations should rule Angola, but whether Angola would be allowed to become independent at all, or would fall back into neo-colonialist domination by the imperialist powers and their local associates.

There was and is only one organisation capable of leading Angola into true independence, and that is the MPLA. It was only the MPLA which made any serious contribution to the liberation struggle in recent years. It was and is only the MPLA which has had any properly-conceived programme and policy of transforming Angola from a colony into a free and progressive state. It has been only the MPLA which has introduced into its liberated areas any programme of reform, education and development in line with its long-term aims.

The imperialist powers and their lackey press have claimed that they were forced to back UNITA and FNLA only to counteract the 'massive' support given by the Soviet Union to the 'Marxist' MPLA and to prevent Angola from succumbing to what they described as little short of Soviet occupation. This phoney argument is designed to conceal the fact that Angola has been under imperialist occupation for 500 years, and that its enormous wealth has been looted by the imperialists during the whole of this period at the expense of the local population and Africa as a whole.

In the words of the *Financial Mail*: "Strife-torn Angola, with oil reserves equal to those of Kuwait and total exports that exceed by far those of either Zaire or Zambia, is a rich prize." It is the second richest country in black Africa, second only to South Africa itself, and its enormous potential has so far been only partially realised. Its main exports have been oil (swallowed up largely by America), coffee and diamonds (South Africa), iron ore (Portugal). The Benguela railway, British owned but

closed by the war, was vital for exports from Zambia and Zaire .... and this may explain something of the political stance which has been adopted by these two countries in relation to Angola.

South Africa is also heavily entrenched in Angola, and its economic involvement has been increasing year by year. There is a substantial South African investment in diamonds and other mining. South African exports to Angola, which stood at R2 million in 1964, had risen to R44 million last year. A big part of the R100 million already invested in the Cunene hydro-electric scheme comes from South Africa, which hopes eventually to include Angola in its giant electricity grid planned to cover the whole of southern and central Africa.

While MPLA is consistently labelled 'Marxist' and 'pro-Soviet' by the capitalist press, no adjectives are attached to either FNLA or UNITA, which are painted as purely patriotic and nationalist in their actions and objectives. Yet both UNITA and FNLA are being used merely as fronts by the imperialist powers (in whose ranks South Africa is included) to protect their investment and perpetuate their exploitation of the human and material resources of Angola. The conquest of Angola by UNITA and FNLA would change nothing in Angola but the flag. The people would remain in chains.

What about Soviet support for MPLA?, scream the imperialists. Wouldn't that turn Angola into a Soviet colony?

Well, why is the Soviet Union backing MPLA – supported by all the other socialist states, a number of other African states, and indeed progressive humanity everywhere? The main aim of socialist states is to break the stranglehold of imperialism on Africa, to help create the conditions in which MPLA could build a true people's democracy in the interests of all its people. Over the decades since the second world war, it has been the reality of Soviet power which has made it possible for one African country after another to break the shackles of imperialism and attain independence. An even more striking example of Soviet disinterestedness has been Cuba, today very largely dependent militarily and economically on Soviet aid, but yet completely independent in the determination of its own policies. Without the Soviet presence, Cuba would stand in imminent peril of being swallowed up by American imperialism. Yet who would dare assert that Fidel Castro, the liberator, is a Soviet stooge? Who would claim that Cuba is not building socialism according

to its own design? The achievements of Cuba under the Castro regime have been remarkable by any standards. Yet there are no Soviet investments in Cuba, and the Soviet Union does not draw any profit from the exploitation of the labour of the Cuban people. Soviet aid has made it possible for Cuba to realise its own potential, as Castro himself has acknowledged on more than one occasion.

The support of the socialist and progressive African and other states for MPLA provides the only guarantee that Angola will be able to enjoy true independence. On the other hand, a defeat for MPLA will be a victory for imperialism and the South African racists who are the real forces which stand to benefit from a victory by UNITA/FNLA.

The whole world should have risen to condemn the role of South Africa in the invasion of Angola, yet nothing has been more significant than the silence of the West in the fact of this blatant aggression by the forces of apartheid. The South African Government has officially admitted at least two unlawful entries into the territory of Angola – once to occupy the Ruacana Falls hydro-electric scheme, and once allegedly in pursuit of SWAPO guerrillas, 13 of whom it claimed to have killed on Angolan soil. Nor can there be any doubt that the so-called 'white' column marching on Luanda included South African personnel, plus South African helicopters and armoured cars. No such invasion force could have operated without South African connivance and aid, and in this action South Africa is aided and abetted by the imperialist powers in whose interests, as well as her own, she is engaging in this dangerous exercise.

In these circumstances, we can only express our dismay at the failure of the Organisation of African Unity to act in defence of African independence against South African and imperialist aggression. And for President Amin to send telegrams of congratulation to Britain, the United States and China, while condemning the role of the Soviet Union, is to align the OAU with the very forces who have trained, armed and supplied the FNLA and UNITA, as well as the mercenaries, and to leave the genuine freedom fighters in the lurch. President Amin claims to be 'neutral' over Angola, yet it is clear there is no such thing as neutrality in Angola. In fact, Angola has effectively exposed the hypocrisy of so-called 'neutrality' or 'non-alignment' in international affairs, as well as the attempt to equate the two

'super-powers' with imperialism of one brand or another which is supposed to be equally unacceptable to the third world. You are either for or against Angolan independence, either for or against MPLA, the only instrument capable of achieving Angolan independence. To thank Britain, the United States and China is to thank the forces whose efforts have been devoted to restoring the power and influence of imperialism and racism in southern Africa.

It is sad to have to note once again that China's wrong foreign policy has landed her in the imperialist camp. To the long list of disastrous adventures – Indonesia, the Sudan, Chile, Bangladesh etc. – must now be added the shameful history of Chinese backing of the forces opposed to MPLA for no other reason than that MPLA is receiving aid from the Soviet Union. These are not accidents or aberrations, but flow from the central theme of Chinese foreign policy, which is that the antagonism between China and the Soviet Union is the principal contradiction frustrating the implementation of the Maoist policy of world revolution. China regards what it calls 'Soviet revisionism' as a greater danger than world imperialism, and is therefore prepared to enter into alliances with the imperialists in order to mobilise the maximum possible force against the Soviet Union and its allies. Pursuing this line, China has even come out in support of Vorster's policy of 'detente' and 'dialogue' with Africa. (*Rand Daily Mail* 10/10/1975)

In this matter we can only echo the words of the resolution passed by the conference of Communist Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean which took place in Havana, Cuba, in June 1975.

"This conference energetically condemns the foreign policy of the leadership of the Communist Party of China, which flirts with Yankee imperialism, defends its presence in Asia and Europe, justifies NATO, stimulates West German imperialism and revanchism, attacks and slanders the USSR with the same viciousness of the worst spokesmen of international reaction, fosters the aggressive militarism of the world bourgeoisie against it, promotes the insane policy of cold war against the heroic Soviet people, and in Latin America has its most ominous expression in the shameless connivance with the Chilean military junta to which it gives political support over the blood of thousands of Communists, Socialists and other patriots murdered by the brutal repression of the fascist tyranny. The

Chinese leadership also fosters everywhere groups of pseudo-revolutionaries who, from a false radicalism, divide the Left, attack the Communist Parties, obstruct progressive processes and frequently act as enemy agents within the revolutionary movement. To confront this policy of treason against unity, solidarity and the best traditions of the world revolutionary movement is a duty for all the Communist Parties of Latin America."

It is a duty for our Party too, and for all genuine African nationalists and patriots throughout our continent. If imperialism were to triumph in Angola with the aid of apartheid South Africa, China would have to accept its share of the blame and odium for having trained and supported the murderous bands of FNLA led by the brother-in-law of Zaire President Mobutu whose hands are still stained with the blood of the Congo's first Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba.

Fortunately, there are signs that more and more African countries are realising that the slogans of non-intervention and neutrality are as much an aid to the forces of reaction as they were in relation to Spain during the Spanish civil war. By the time these words appear in print, it is to be hoped the OAU will have taken effective steps to rebuff the forces of South Africa and the imperialists, and mobilised all its resources to strengthen the cause of true independence and liberation in Angola and all southern Africa.

In this connection we draw attention to the fine statement issued by Oliver Tambo, Acting President of the African National Congress, warning that "the recent invasion of Angola by South African troops is the most dangerous crisis faced by Africa since the U.S. intervention in the Congo (Leopoldville) and later the invasion of Guinea by fascist Portugal".

Pointing out that "South Africa is today the centre of the counter-revolution against Africa", and that "imperialist designs to obstruct the struggle for liberation in Angola and the rest of Southern Africa will converge on Pretoria to take advantage of the economic and military strength of the Vorster fascist regime", the statement concluded: "The ANC calls on the OAU, the African masses, and the progressive and peace-loving peoples of the world to demand the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all South African fascist troops and neo-colonialist interventionists from Angola. We further appeal for all political and material support for the people of Angola, led by the

MPLA, in their heroic struggle against foreign aggression."

SACP CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting towards the end of 1975, the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party adopted a resolution pledging support for MPLA in the struggle for a free and independent Angola, and towards independence day on November 11 the national chairman of the SACP, Dr Yusuf Dadoo, cabled President Agostinho Neto:

"The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party greets with unbounded joy Angola's independence under the banner of MPLA born in the fire of struggle first against Portuguese colonialism and now against imperialism and local reaction. A true people's Angola is feared by imperialism and especially by its main bastion on our continent, racist South Africa. That is why imperialism continues its attempts to destroy your revolutionary gains. We have the utmost confidence in your final victory and we pledge full solidarity in the struggle ahead. Your victory is our victory and the victory of all Africa.

"Death to imperialism and all its henchmen! Long live People's Angola under the leadership of MPLA! Heartiest congratulations and warmest fraternal greetings."

The Central Committee members devoted long discussion to the situation in southern Africa, and adopted important resolutions outlining the tasks confronting the revolutionary forces. The main resolutions and discussion documents are printed in this issue of our journal.

SOUTH AFRICA BELONGS TO ALL ITS PEOPLE

The Government's Bantustan policy presupposes that each separate African 'nation state' which will be created under it will have an existence somehow separate from that of 'white' South Africa itself. But all the recent economic indicators point the other way.

The latest figures, issued by the Department of Statistics in Pretoria last September, show that the number of Africans in the six major labour categories in South Africa has increased over the last ten years at six times the rate of the white labour increase. In April 1975 the total number of people employed in the manufacturing, construction and electrical industries, in mining, the Post Office and on the South African Railways was 2,740,442, of whom 1,751,778 were African and 589,070 white (the remainder were Coloureds and Asians).

Ten years previously, in April 1975, the total employed numbered 1,987,513, of whom 1,104,942 were Africans and 482,977 whites. The work force is getting blacker and blacker.

The largest number of Africans is employed in the manufacturing industry – 1,049,100, as against 294,400 whites. This is a ratio of about six Africans to every white. Approximately the same ratio applies to the construction industry. There is a higher ratio of black to white on the mines, but the picture here is distorted by the very high proportion of 'foreign' Africans among the work force.

The Government is trying to reduce its dependence on 'foreign' labour, but inevitably this increases the dependence of the South African economy on the labour resources of the Bantustans. Many years ago, the then Prime Minister Verwoerd gave the year 1978 as the date when the flow of black labour from the reserves to the 'white' areas would begin to reverse as his apartheid and separate development policy began to bite.

But in a paper read to the Economic Society of South Africa in Johannesburg last September, Mrs Jill Nattrass, of Natal University's Department of Economics, showed that it was precisely the policy of separate development which was entrenching migratory labour as a way of life in South Africa.

"The situation has grown steadily worse as South Africa has developed", she said. In the 34 years between the censuses of 1934 and 1970 the number of migratory labourers grew at an average compound rate of 3.1 per cent a year. In the period 1946-70 the proportion of migratory workers rose at a faster rate than the total number of economically active Africans. By 1970, one in three African workers in South Africa was a migrant, and she estimated the total of African migratory workers at between 1.75 and 2 million. Male African migrants constituted 59 per cent of the total of economically active African men in the 'white' areas.

Migratory labour is at the root of South Africa's cheap labour system which guarantees investors such huge returns on their capital. Employers are relieved of the responsibility of providing proper housing and other social facilities for the workers and their families – because of course the families have to be left behind. The employers are also relieved of the costs of urban transport levies, because most migrants are housed in compounds near to their workplaces. And, finally, the employers justify the low wages they pay by claiming that the migrants supplement their cash incomes with the subsistence income they receive in the reserves. From the government's point of view, the most important feature of migratory labour is that it prevents the development of a permanent urban proletariat and the functioning of trade unions and political organisations which would fight for the migrants' interests – improved wages and working conditions, the vote etc.

But the greater the spread of migratory labour, the more the capacity of the Bantustans to exist as independent states is eroded. Mrs Nattrass states that for every five men working in the rural areas in the Bantustans, there are six away from home working as migrants. (In a pass law case in Cape Town in October, Dr Francis Wilson, head of the research division of the department of economics at the University of Cape Town, told the court: "Six out of every seven men earning money in the homelands work outside the homelands. Growth rate in the homelands is just not enough for the population growth." – *Sunday Times*, October 12, 1975.)

Nor are the men who migrate only able-bodied; they are also among the best educated. The money spent by the Bantustan 'governments' on education benefits the 'white' economy more than their own. Using official statistics, Mrs Nattrass shows that of every 14 African children completing primary school plus two additional years of education, half are at school in the 'white' areas and half in the Bantustans. Of the latter seven, one continues his education, three look for jobs in the Bantustans, and three migrate to the 'white' areas. At the level of primary school plus four years of education, the rate of migration from the Bantustans reaches 90 per cent.

In an interview with the *Financial Mail* (September 19), Mrs Nattrass said: "I get incensed when people talk of developing the homelands but ignore migratory labour. Of KwaZulu men, for example, 28 per cent are employed in subsistence

agriculture; 21 per cent have non-agricultural jobs there or commute daily to jobs in nearby 'white' areas; while 51 per cent are migrants".

In 1970, she said, migrants from KwaZulu earned R139 million. About 81 per cent of this was spent in the 'white' areas, but the 19 per cent (R27 million) that was sent back home represented a huge slice of KwaZulu's income – for every R1 generated in the subsistence sector of KwaZulu, Zulu migrants sent home 93 cents.

The drain on migrant labour is not only in numbers but also in health, social and physical. Migratory labour breaks up African family life, separates husbands from wives, parents from children. It leads to the spread of disease – the average working life of a migrant in the modern sector of the economy is only 19 years. The result is that the subsistence sector is producing proportionately less and less. Between 1960 and 1970 the average output per worker in KwaZulu's subsistence sector declined from R56 to R51. It was only the increased remittances from migrants (up from R42 to R84 per migrant in the same period) that helped to compensate for the decline in the KwaZulu production.

The picture in KwaZulu can be duplicated in all the other Bantustans, and the overall conclusion is that so long as migratory labour continues, the Bantustans can only become more and more dependent on it and on their connection with 'white' South Africa. Many of the Bantustan leaders have recently been talking of securing foreign investment to promote industrial development in their reserves, but this whole concept is based on an illusion. First of all, foreign investment does not lead to greater economic independence, nor even to increased living standards for the local population, as studies in Swaziland, Malawi, the Ivory Coast and other African countries in the grip of neo-colonialism have demonstrated.

Secondly, no amount of foreign investment can break the links which bind the Bantustans to South Africa. Even the manager of the Bantu Investment Corporation, Dr J. Adendorff, whose job it is to raise funds for investment in the Bantustans, admitted in a speech in Durban last September that "the South African economic market would remain a single entity, despite separate development". (*Star* September 16, 1975.) Dr Adendorff claimed that the Bantu Investment Corporation had produced investment in the Bantustans of more than R200 million

in the last 15 years, leading to the creation of about 40,000 jobs. Just how inadequate this is may be judged by the fact that between 30,000 and 40,000 Africans enter the labour market in the Bantustans each year. For the majority of them there is no alternative but to join the huge pool of unemployed waiting for the chance to secure employment as a migratory labour in 'white' South Africa at sub-standard wages.

For its part, the Nationalist Government of South Africa has neither the will nor the capacity to abolish the migratory labour system. As has already been pointed out, the only basis on which the Bantustans can exist is the consolidation and extension of the migratory labour system. That is why no amount of tinkering with the way in which the migratory labour system is administered can 'improve' it. Migratory labour is the cornerstone of the whole apartheid edifice, and must be totally destroyed, together with the system it supports. The African workers of South Africa have never been and will never be foreigners in the land of their birth. The Bantustan scheme, for which they never asked but which has been foisted on them, is merely a wicked device to steal from the Africans the wealth they have created with their sweat and blood, to deprive them of their inheritance. The only answer is to reassert, in the words of the Freedom Charter, that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white . . . . that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality; and that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities."

South Africa is ours – all of it – and nobody is going to take it away from us.

HOW INDEPENDENT THE TRANSKEI?

The Chief Minister of the Transkei, the hated Matanzima, has announced that the Transkei is to become completely independent from South Africa on October 26, 1976, and that he would thereafter apply for membership of both the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations.

Let us be quite clear about what Matanzima is doing. In return for 'independence' in the Transkei, he is ceding for ever the claim of the Transkeians to the rest of the country – the richest country in Africa, which has been built up by the sweat and blood of Africans who constitute – and will continue to constitute – the vast bulk of the labour force. Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and other great cities of the Cape, not to mention the rest of the country – what would they be without the contribution of the Xhosa-speaking peoples of the Transkei and Ciskei? Who built the railways and roads which joined these centres together, and carried the goods between the inland centres and the ports? Who built and work in the factories, mines and farms which produce the wealth of the so-called 'white' South Africa? It is enough to make any genuine patriot shake with rage that Matanzima is prepared to give away his people's birthright in the name of what he is pleased to call 'freedom' and 'independence'. This man who boasts that he has obtained freedom for his people by peaceful negotiation, and contrasts his achievement with the 'chaos' of Angola – this man is nothing but a traitor and a sell-out, who is prepared to give his people into serfdom as migratory labourers in South Africa so that he and a handful of his minions can talk nonsense in the Umtata Legislative Assembly, drive around in big motor cars and live in grand houses, and hand out the perks and licences to one another to open stores and run bus companies and garages so that they, too, in the small way allowed them by their white masters, can share in the exploitation of their people.

This Matanzima is a little man quite without national pride, totally unfit to rule the proud Xhosa people. On October 1st, 1975, his Transkeian Government symbolically took over control of the police force operating in his territory – but one South African special branch man still remains in Umtata to see that nothing goes wrong. Matanzima has already appointed five 'ambassadors' to represent his government in Pretoria, Washington, Bonn, London and Paris. But where were his ambassadors trained? In Pretoria, by the South African Government. And what happened to one of his ambassadors, Professor M. Njisane, when he entered the lounge of the Savoy Hotel in Umtata in September, *after* his appointment had been announced? He was summarily ejected, despite the fact that the manager had been informed who he was. "It doesn't matter who he is", the manager replied. No blacks could come onto the lounge until

next year, after independence. And where is Professor Njisane to make his representations on behalf of his independent Transkei government? Why, in Pretoria, where no doubt he will be thrown out of other hotels until he learns to carry a sign round his neck reading 'Foreign Native' so that he can be accorded the status of an honorary white.

In addition to his white-trained police force, Matanzima is also to have a white-trained army to maintain 'law and order' in his dominion. Since his army is only a battalion strong, it is ridiculous to think that it will be capable of engaging in battle the South African army or any other invader for that matter. In fact, Matanzima has already made clear that he needs an army to deal with 'terrorists', and has assured the Vorster Government that it can rely on his full support in the fight against 'terrorism' and 'international communism'. Just imagine, Matanzima, in the name of his Transkei 'freedom', is ready to go into battle side by side with Vorster against the real freedom fighters who are preparing to wage an all-out struggle for the recovery of their country from the hands of the white racists who have stolen it over the centuries. And these freedom fighters, Matanzima should remember, are supported by both the OAU and the UN, who under the circumstances are hardly likely to welcome Matanzima with open arms as the representative of a free state.

Which brings us to the question: who put Matanzima where he is? Who gave him the right to speak for the people of the Transkei? He came to power under the provisions of an undemocratic constitution foisted on the territory by the South African Government. The people of the Transkei never asked for separate development, and to this day the Transkei Legislative Assembly is dominated by a majority of Government-appointed and Government-paid chiefs. Ever since the 1960 Pondoland rebellion, Matanzima has ruled with the assistance of the notorious Proclamation 400 which gives him the power to detain people without trial, banish them and burn down their homes, ban public meetings and in other ways terrorise the opposition. Year by year this Proclamation has been renewed by the South African Government *at Matanzima's request*, since it has been quite clear that without terror Matanzima could not maintain himself in power. Matanzima has said he will repeal some of the provisions of Proclamation 400 after independence, but has also made it clear he will not tolerate terrorists, com-

munists, trade unionists or other potential trouble makers. Nor would the South African Government permit him to do so.

What, some may ask, could South Africa do to force a reluctant Transkei Government to do its bidding? The answer is that after independence, the Transkei's administration and economy will still be in the hands of the South African Government. Even today, in all Transkei Government Departments but one, behind every African minister sits a white secretary who pulls all the strings. *The Star* asked on October 3, 1975: "How independent can the Transkei be when it is and will be for years heavily dependent on South Africa financially? Most of the Transkei's budget this year of over R100 million comes from the South African Government." On the very day that Matanzima announced the date of independence, the Transkei Government asked the South African Government for an extra R14 million to tide the country over until the end of the financial year. Matanzima said the money was needed "for public works related, in the main, to independence next year." Public works? What, more prisons? The Transkei cannot even feed itself – 90 per cent of it food supply is imported. (*Rand Daily Mail* 22/10/1975.)

Matanzima can't even organise his independence celebrations by himself. He has already appointed a committee to organise the festivities on the great day. And who are they? "Ten senior Transkei Government officials and seconded officials of the Departments of Bantu Administration and Development, Foreign Affairs and the Xhosa Development Corporation." (*Rand Daily Mail,* September 27, 1975.) Many of these, if not most, are of course white officials of the South African Government. Clearly, Vorster is leaving no stone unturned to demonstrate just how independent Matanzima really is.

IS THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT DISCRIMINATORY?

Nationalist Party leaders, including Cabinet Ministers and South Africa's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr 'Pik' Botha, have been claiming latesly that they are prepared to dismantle dis-

crimination based solely on colour. They point to certain developments as proof of their sincerity: the removal of race signs in some public places in South Africa and Namibia; the admission of blacks to public libraries from which they have previously been excluded; the abolition of the colour bar at the Nico Malan theatre in Cape Town, mixed sporting events at what is called the 'national' level etc.

Some of these concessions are pure window-dressing to deceive public opinion at home and abroad – practically all of the sports developments fall into this category. But even where the removal of the colour bar is genuine – for example, the admission of blacks to the Johannesburg public library from which they were previously excluded – the impact on South Africa's race structure is marginal. For the million or so Africans living in Soweto, for example, the right to enter and use the Johannesburg public library 20 miles away is purely theoretical. For the vast majority of blacks in South Africa, the reality of racist oppression has not changed one whit.

In an interview published in the *Rand Daily Mail* on October 1st, 1975, the Minister of the Interior and Information, Dr Connie Mulder, often tipped as a likely successor to Vorster, was asked by reporter Patrick Laurence: "Where does South Africa stand on race discrimination?" Mulder's answer was instructive:

"It is a difficult question. It goes into the details of our whole policy. Moving away from discrimination, as we have stated, is our policy, but it does not mean we are prepared to sacrifice our identity or expect any other nation to sacrifice their identity. If anybody expects that, they are expecting too much and have misjudged what we have in mind."

Mulder then listed the four foundations of Nationalist Party policy: maintenance of national identity; refusal to share power in white political institutions but a simultaneous creation of separate institutions for blacks; law and order; and moving away from discrimination based purely on colour.

Laurence then asked: "But is refusal to share power in white-controlled South Africa not discriminatory against blacks living in that area?"

Mulder: "Is it discrimination solely on the basis of colour if I refuse, as a white, to have other people in the white parliament if at the same time I create opportunities for other people in their own parliaments? Even if it is discriminatory, it is also

discriminatory against the white man who will have no authority in the Transkei."

This is a prize specimen of Nationalist casuistry and hypocrisy. Like a lawyer, Mulder flatly denies discrimination, but in case the ruling goes against him, files an alternative plea of justification because the other fellow also practises discrimination – an argument which conveniently ignores the fact that whatever discrimination exists in the Transkei was imposed on the territory by the white government of South Africa. In any case, two wrongs do not make a right.

Another specimen of Nationalist 'decolonisation' – the abolition of the Masters and Servants Act – also deserves closer inspection. On the surface it seems to be a progressive measure, abolishing the feudal servitude of the employee to his master. But a study of the issue by Colin Bundy in the May-June 1975 issue of the *South African Labour Bulletin* shows that the Nationalist Government was merely giving away something which had lost its value and was of no further use to them.

Bundy writes: "Viewed historically in the context of class relations between (predominantly white) employers and (predominantly black) employees, certain obvious features of the legislation's past strike one immediately. The first is that the laws were originally enacted when the overwhelming number of employers were farmers; secondly, that they have remained most relevant and most frequently applied in agricultural labour relations. In the wider social context, the Masters and Servants legislation was conspicuously clumsy and ineffective, and came to be replaced by other more specific, more complex measures to control the labour force. Finally, that by the time of their repeal, the laws were of very slight overall significance in disciplining black labourers in South Africa . . ."

Prosecutions under the Masters and Servants laws showed a gradual, steady decline in the twentieth century: in 1928 there were 43,000 prosecutions; in 1955, 28,500 prosecutions; in 1968 only 23,000, while for the year ended June 30, 1973, there were 16,477 cases in terms of Masters and Servants laws *and* the Bantu Labour Registration Act. By contrast, prosecutions under the pass laws increased enormously. In 1928 there were 44,000 pass law prosecutions and 10,000 for trespass. In 1960 the totals had risen to 670,000 and 166,000 respectively.

The Nationalist Government has passed a barrage of laws for controlling, directing and disciplining the black labour force far

more effectively than was possible under the Masters and Servants laws. "It will be readily appreciated how cumbersome are the workings of the Masters and Servants laws – with the need for the employer to be involved in a court case for each offender – compared with the sweeping bureaucratic vigilance and ubiquity. And how irrelevant and blunt a penalty is a few months imprisonment when compared with the abilities of Bantu Affairs officials to correlate, canalise, and centralise the 'labour units' – to dictate, that is, the lives of the workers involved in a migrant system that takes on more and more of the characteristics of bureaucratically ordered forced labour."

Even then, the abolition of the Masters and Servants Act by the Nationalist Government was not so much a measure of its enlightenment as its opportunism. Dock workers and miners in Mobile, Alabama, refused to discharge South African coal from a ship, citing a clause in the 1930 tariff that prohibited importations into the United States of goods produced under forced labour. Bundy writes: "The repeal of the penal provisions of the Masters and Servants code seems to have removed the grounds for the court action pressed for by the United Mineworkers Union in Alabama to prevent the importing of South African coal. Gracefully enough, the South African Government announced its intention to repeal the laws that had attracted such pointed critical attention. It could conduct the repeal with something of a flourish secure in the knowledge that even the (politically so influential) 'small and backward' agricultural employers were sufficiently equipped with other means to acquiesce in the employers' consensus that the Masters and Servants legislation was not only anachronistic but also obsolete".

DEFEAT VORSTER & HIS COLLABORATORS

The recent full plenary session of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party considered a number of reports dealing with the new developments in the internal and international situations. Amongst the reports discussed and adopted was the following background analysis of the political situation confronting the liberation movement.

1. In the past few years, the objective situation has become progressively less favourable for the survival of white supremacy in South Africa. Amongst the most important reasons for this are the following:

(a) The collapse of Portuguese colonialism and, in particular, the victory in Mozambique. These events have created new

political and physical conditions for the pursuit of our struggle. Reaction has been deprived of an important ally - Caetano – with a NATO-backed army of over 100,000 troops operational in Southern Africa and, at all times, ready to co-ordinate its activities with the Vorster and Smith military forces. The liberation movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe have gained a friendly border of considerable length.

Apart from the creation of a new geography of struggle in Southern Africa, the events have also had a psychological impact of great importance. They have helped to undermine one of the great obstacles to real confrontation – a belief in the invincibility of the white forces of reaction.

(b) The South African economy is going through one of its most severe crises, caused by the unending economic recession in the capitalist world and aggravated, at certain levels, by those aspects of traditional apartheid which act as an obstacle to economic expansion. Inflation in South Africa has reached a scale which is amongst the highest in the world. In particular the gap between white and black incomes grows wider and wider despite some of the much-publicised wage concessions.

(c) The international community has stepped up pressure on the question of Namibia, and this is being backed by increased activity by the forces of SWAPO.

(d) The Smith regime's capacity to contain the mounting pressures against it has weakened considerably as a result of the objective changes in the Southern African situation, and in particular, as a result of the events in Mozambique. The prospect of majority rule in Zimbabwe within the foreseeable future, has undoubtedly improved. A break-through in Zimbabwe will have significance beyond its borders, removing the last important slice of the cordon sanitaire which cushioned the white south from the liberation forces and independent Africa.

(e) Industrial and political action within the country, especially amongst the workers and youth, has been on the increase and there is also evidence of a search by the people for more effective ways to defend themselves and to begin striking back at the system.

2. The ruling class in South Africa has taken measures along a broad front to defend itself against the existing and potential threat to its survival, created by the changes referred to. These measures are designed to cope with, divert and absorb the demand for radical change, both inside and outside the country, which has been given new stimulus by the factors previously mentioned. *Internally* the regime has encouraged and tolerated actions and reforms which fall into a number of different categories. Amongst these are:

(a) Minimal wage increases in response to the growing and generalised strike movement which threatened to create industrial and economic chaos throughout the country. These actions also placed on the agenda the right to strike and the right to free and independent trade union organisation. The government has responded by changes in the law which pretend to give Africans the right to strike. There is also a noticeable search by the government, some employers and sections of the white trade union movement for an acceptable substitute for real independent black trade unions.

(b) Reforms in the area of so-called 'petty apartheid'. As the name implies, this is an area of petty discrimination whose maintenance is not indispensable to the continuation of white supremacy. In fact, the disappearance of apartheid of the park-bench variety, hailed in some quarters as evidence of fundamental advance, is used as a rationalisation for leaving intact those aspects of racism which really count.

(c) Actions designed to side-track the internal demand for majority rule over the whole of South Africa. For the African people the Bantustan programme is being pursued with a renewed vigour and the first so-called independent Bantustan will raise its flag in the Transkei by October next year. For the Coloured people the compromise offered so far is the ill-fated Coloured Representative Council, with a distinct possibility soon of some second-level representation of the Coloured people in the white state apparatus. For the Indian community activity is being stepped up to gain acceptance for the South African Indian Council. In the case of the Africans, part of the purpose behind these schemes is to break their unity and to create permanent and irreversible divisions along tribal lines. In the case of the black com-

munity as a whole, it is hoped to divide and weaken them by the old technique of differential treatment.

All the reforms, whilst imposed from the top, depend for their success on the collaboration of a class within the black community with a vested interest in the perpetuation of white supremacy in its new guise. The regime hopes to win the co-operation of the existing black middle class and, in the case of the Indian community, of a small but wealthy bourgeoisie. It is also beginning to encourage the creation and growth of social groups, within the limits of the apartheid scheme, who will benefit economically at the expense of the mass: groups which will be hostile to radical solutions. It also hopes to break down the hostility of the overwhelming majority of the oppressed people to these fraudulent schemes.

(d) Reforms necessitated by purely economic factors such as the shortage of skilled labour and the need to adjust some of the traditional demarcation lines between white and black labour particularly in the area of skilled and semi-skilled operations. The uncertainty of the future flow of foreign migrant labour for the mines (and the growing political menace to South Africa of a regular large influx of black workers from areas of radical political ferment like Mozambique) must lead to a greater reliance on local labour. There is already evidence that to attract such labour the mining industry will be forced more and more to produce changes in the direction of a more permanent and stable local work force.

3. *Externally* the racist state is pursuing a multiple policy designed (i) to de-escalate the mood of world and African hostility towards it, (ii) to discourage moral and material support for the aims of the liberation front, and especially to prevent base facilities from being provided to it by strategically placed neighbouring states, and (iii) to create much needed outlets for capital investment and the marketing of its goods in the African continent.

In pursuit of this policy it is, of course, relying in the first place on the build-up of its military apparatus, not only as a weapon against the liberation movement but also to discourage, through the threat of retaliation, any direct or indirect aid (from African states) to insurgent forces. In addition its

external response to the new situation incorporates some other manoeuvres:

(a) It is using the economic weapon. This takes the form of offers of 'aid', trade and investment in under-developed areas in Africa. South Africa has a relatively large reserve of economic resources to devote to this purpose. In the interests of its future expansionism, it can afford, in the initial period, to give the appearance of being 'disinterested' and of undertaking such projects for the mutual benefit of both parties.

(b) South Africa projects itself as the champion of 'peaceful co-existence' and 'non-interference in the internal affairs of other states'. Consistent with this posture it has reacted in a sophisticated way to the changes that have occurred in areas like Mozambique. It has also for the time being withdrawn its troops from Zimbabwe. But its recent intervention in Angola proves that it will continue to act as a direct aggressor when the situation suits it.

(c) South Africa is stepping up its diplomatic offensive aimed at breaking down its isolation, particularly from the rest of Africa. The well-known 'detente' exercise forms part of this offensive and has already led to an increase in the number of top level exchanges of visits and agreements between certain African states and the Vorster regime. All this is coupled with an intense public relations campaign to mislead Africa and the world on the real meaning of the Bantustan programme and the internal reforms, and to 'substantiate' its claim that it is moving towards decolonisation, and recognises the national rights of the black majority. The world tours by the heads of the Bantustan administrations are partly designed to gain acceptance for this distortion.

(d) South Africa realises that the correlation of local and world forces makes it impossible for the Smith regime (in its present form) to continue to survive for much longer. It is, however, anxious to ensure that the change which is coming is *least* damaging to the more fundamental interests of South Africa's white ruling class. This is why Vorster is playing the 'honest broker'. In addition, any settlement which might emerge from the initiatives in which Vorster is involved will be used to 'prove' that more can be achieved by dialogue

than by confrontation and, thus, to reinforce the collaborationist lobby in Africa.

(e) Above all, the South African ruling class is going all out to create a special relationship between it and some independent states in Africa. Some countries are going through a most serious internal economic crisis as a result of a dependence on the world capitalist market and a continuing legacy of colonial and neo-colonial underdevelopment. The apparent short-term advantages of a 'normal' trade relationship with the racist regime will continue to be exploited as an anti-liberation weapon by reaction both inside and outside South Africa.

4. It is not difficult to demonstrate that the responses of the white regime to the new situation are all designed to ensure the survival of its supremacy in the changed conditions. But it would nevertheless be unwise to dismiss the advances made (however limited thus far) in the regime's detente manoeuvres. It would also be wrong to assume that the ruling class is incapable of winning and extending collaboration for some of its policies from small groups amongst the black majority.

The launching of a more effective ideological campaign both inside and outside the country to expose the true motivations behind the 'reforms' and the 'sweet talk' is only part of the answer. We must also recognise that it is, at rock bottom, a battle of interests and not just ideas. It is a battle in which ideology and public relations activity express, and play on, real and vital economic interests of social classes and groups both inside and outside the country. It is such interests which often inhibit national pride and win black groups to collaborate in the oppression of their brothers or to make no real effort to help end it. It is important that we understand and identify these forces in order to elaborate a correct strategy of struggle.

South Africa is an important part of the world system of imperialism. Despite its condemnatory rhetoric, the imperialist West has always acted as the external mainstay of apartheid in the military sphere, at the United Nations and, lately, also through the neo-colonial pressures it manages to wield in parts of independent Africa. BUT, FOR THE SURVIVAL OF APARTHEID, THIS KIND OF COLLABORATION IS NO LONGER ENOUGH. THE NEW SITUATION WE HAVE DESCRIBED MAKES IT IMPERATIVE THAT THE RACIST

REGIME WINS BLACK COLLABORATION (INTERNALLY AND IN THE CONTINENT) FOR ITS OPPRESSIVE POLICIES. WITHOUT SUCH COLLABORATION ITS VERY SURVIVAL IS AT RISK.

Let us briefly examine the social and class basis of the internal group amongst whom Vorster hopes to find his collaborators.

(a) In contrast to its traditional approach the regime is now deliberately encouraging the emergence of a black business community under controlled conditions. In partnership with the existing banking giants, the first bank has been launched in which Africans hold the majority of shares. The bank's president, Mr. Motsuenyane, excitedly announced that this is the "first example of white leadership with black control" and "carries the hopes of the black people". In the white areas, a number of trading restrictions have been eased in cases where the black businessman serves the black community. Already the National African Federated Chambers of Commerce (NAFCO) is suggesting that the growth of a black bourgeoisie can be most effective in the political struggle to ensure an orderly path towards equality with the white minority. This is an echo of the 'black-power-through-business' group in the U.S.A. which exploited their people's militant sentiments in order to enrich themselves and eventually to join the white economic establishment.

(b) In the Bantustans the government is encouraging the growth of a significant group of petty capitalists and, in some areas, farming entrepreneurs. The Bantu Investment Corporation has been erecting hundreds of business buildings for leasing to African businessmen in the Bantustans. It is also providing loan facilities to African businessmen for commercial enterprises and for service, and other, industries. In a continent where even the most right-wing black leaders are forced to pretend that they are pursuing an anti-capitalist development policy, the leaders of South Africa's Bantustans openly extol the virtues of free enterprise, promise South African and foreign investors that they will enjoy 'problem-free labour', that no free trade unionism will be allowed and that there will be no nationalisation.

(c) There is evidence too of a new emphasis in the government's approach to the Indian upper-middle class and com-

mercial bourgeoisie. In collaboration with white capital, an Indian bank has been established. The indiscriminate government campaigns of the '50s and '60s to segregate the Indian community and, more particularly, to remove its upper trading class as a competitive threat to white interests, have either achieved their target or been slowed down in the interests of gaining the collaboration of the Indian upper crust. The Indian middle class (including its professional section) benefitted substantially from the economic 'boom' conditions of the late '60s and early '70s. Some of them are easy prey to the government's cynical exploitation of events like the Uganda action against its Asian community. The purpose of this is to instil fear of African majority rule and a belief – especially amongst traders – that they are better off under the white state.

5. It is from within the above groups that the regime hopes to broaden its collaborationist base amongst the oppressed and, for this reason, it is likely that the process of encouraging its growth will continue. The machinery of routine administration, including access to authority, will more and more be channelled through the communal and tribal institutions, creating a day-to-day dependency on them by the mass of the people.

Racial barriers against the 'natural' expansion of this group into the effective levels of economic power (monopolised by the white bourgeoisie) will, of course, continue to trigger off in its ranks, 'national' feelings and antagonism to the white state. But, equally, sections of the emerging black middle class are antagonistic to the more radical aims of our liberation movement which has increasingly recognised the fundamental links between national and social emancipation in South Africa. Thus, in so far as the black middle class is impelled towards black nationalism, the predominant tendency will be for sections of it to compete with the existing national movement for the allegiance of the people or even to capture it from within in order to steer it away from radicalism and in a direction of old-style bourgeois nationalism.

6. In the light of all these developments it is becoming more important than ever to safeguard and to reinforce the working class and peasant base of the struggle for true national liberation. We must be on guard against the importation into the national movement of bourgeois ideology even when it is camouflaged to

serve black interests in the guise of nationalism. In relation to the struggle in Mozambique, Samora Machel said that the enemy has two faces, the principle and direct enemy and

> "the other face is that of the indirect and secondary enemy, who presents himself under the cover of a nationalist and even as a revolutionary thus making it difficult to identify him . . . . THE FIGHTER MUST DISTINGUISH FRIEND FROM FOE EVEN IF THE LATTER IS CONCEALED UNDER THE SAME COLOUR, LANGUAGE, FAMILY TIES OR TRIBAL MARKINGS AS THEIR OWN, EVEN IF HE RAISES HIS FLAG WITH US."

The African working people and the working people from the other oppressed groups, can by the very nature of their class positions, have no interest in perpetuating white supremacy in its old or new guises. Nor can they benefit by any solution which substitutes white capitalism with the Bantustan, or any other, variety of black capitalism.

7. The main content of the present phase of our struggle remains a national democratic revolution whose main contingent is the most oppressed and exploited section of the people – the Africans. It is clear that the liberation movement should continue to consolidate the broadest possible alliance – cutting across simple class lines – to achieve this aim. In carrying out this task we must bear in mind that the middle and upper classes amongst the black groups (those already in existence and those in process of formation) are not of exactly the same mould. They include a small wealthy commercial bourgeoisie, an administrative elite, professional groups, small traders and so on. Each of these groups is, in different ways, torn between a complex of economic and political pressures which serves to explain the lack of consistency of their responses to the white regime. From time to time they will inevitably find themselves at loggerheads with the ruling class whom they can serve only in an auxiliary capacity. Their economic position may have improved but colour still determines the outside limits of their economic growth. In their daily lives they will still confront all the stinging humiliations of life which all blacks experience. It is both necessary and possible, therefore, to retain as broad a section of this group as possible in the liberation struggle, as long as the necessary vigilance is maintained against the importation of counter-revolutionary ideology into the national movement. In

general, it is in the very nature of the petty bourgeoisie that it vacillates between the ruling and exploited classes, depending *partly* upon the strength of the main antagonists in the struggle. Thus, the effective heightening by our liberation front of confrontation with the racist state (both political and physical) will win over and mobilise the broadest sections of the black majority including sections of the middle class.

8. It is obvious that a working class party like ours has an indispensable political role to play both as an independent organisation and as part of the liberation front headed by the African National Congress. This is so, not only because of the undoubted contribution we have made in past years to the fight for national and social liberation in South Africa, but also because South Africa's proletariat occupies a special place in the coming struggle; a place that would be swamped, diluted and emasculated in the absence of its independent political instrument. That is why the ruling class invariably directs its main venom against Communists and the Communist Party and this is why the recent period has seen an all-round intensification of anti-Communist and anti-socialist propaganda.

It is a tribute to our Party that it is seen as the most uncompromising enemy of the racist system and that it is feared by the collaborators within the black community because of its belief that the national revolution will not be complete without the eventual abolition of all exploitation of man by man. Anti-Communism, within and outside our movement, stems, less now than ever before, from a mere disagreement about philosophy and political theory in general; it is an enemy instrument for doing battle with the revolutionary forces in the coming struggle for power. It serves, and is designed to appeal to, those elements within the national movement whose class interests make them receptive to a policy of reformism, tribalism and bourgeois forms of nationalism.

Our kind of revolutionary national struggle cries out for the organised participation of the working class and its class political organ – the Party. Experience has proved over and over again that in our revolution united action between the Party and the national movement has been a mutually reinforcing influence in the best interests of the people. Such united action is not, and never has been, as our enemies allege, a ploy to create 'front' organisations or to 'capture' fraternal organisations and trans-

form them into wings of the Party. Our Party exercises its role in relation to the other organisations not by attempting to capture them or transforming them into wings of the Party. The history of participation at top levels of the African National Congress of a long line of black Communists, including our general secretary, Moses Kotane, proves that whatever influence they may wield has its roots in the quality of their leadership and in their absolute loyalty, dedication and preparedness to sacrifice for the Congress cause.

10. The coming period is one of the most vital in the history of our struggle. Amongst South Africa's oppressed there is a greater sense of anticipation, anger and revolutionary fervour than has been witnessed for a long time. Mass activity is on the upsurge and the people want to see even more effective blows against the racists. They will undoubtedly warm to all revolutionary alternatives to the reformist manoeuvres.

Amongst the enemy there is (as we have seen) frenzied and sophisticated activity in all directions, to ride the storm which it fears is building up and to gain black acceptance and collaboration for its new version of white tyranny. It is, therefore, more crucial than ever that our liberation front intensifies its work in every department of revolutionary endeavour. It must, with a new sense of urgency, stimulate organisation and resistance amongst the workers, peasants and youth; it must isolate those (whether inside or outside the liberation movement) who are trying to capture the soul of the oppressed majority for reformist, tribalist and anti-working class solutions; it must cement more effectively the unity of all the black people – African, Coloured and Indian; it must expose and root out all attempts to emasculate and dilute the revolutionary nationalist aims of our liberation front and to replace it with a racist bourgeois nationalism.

Above all, our liberation movement must be seen to be active and alive, unendingly engaging the enemy on every front. It is more vital now than ever before that we demonstrate our capacity to begin and to sustain physical and armed confrontation. In the absence of all-round activity on a scale which demonstrates the credibility of a revolutionary alternative, and a growing liberation presence within our country, the vacillating and reformist elements in the black community and in the rest of Africa will find their rationalisations for detente and un-

principled compromises.

The movement's persistent political and organisational work since the Rivonia set-back, the numerous brave attempts to engage the enemy in the battlefield and its policy of 'no surrender' on all fronts (however difficult the conditions) have won for our liberation movement, and especially its leading contingent the African National Congress, a reserve of revolutionary goodwill amongst the masses. It has strengthened their faith and belief in its leadership. They look to this movement to point to the way out of their centuries old oppression at a time when they sense that a victorious break-through is possible.

Our capacity to justify this faith depends not only on ideological activity and revolutionary commitment but also on the steps we are able to take to sharpen all the organisational instruments of every level of the movement. The young talent is there. The experience is there. The revolutionary understanding and commitment are there. What is needed now, more than ever, is to provide every militant with a new purpose and inspiration for the great struggles ahead, to inject a new spirit of collectivism and collective styles of leadership and to streamline and make more effective all sections of the apparatus with a view to creating an efficient division of tasks and utilising all the best talent.

History has provided us with a favourable situation and rich material to enable us to exploit it in the interests of the mass of our people.

Make Detente Irreversible

INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party takes place in the year of the 30th anniversary of the defeat of fascism. This victory by the anti-fascist coalition, in which the Soviet armed forces played such a significant role, gave new impetus to the popular anti-colonial and anti-imperialist strivings, galvanised worldwide actions for national independence, democracy, justice and peace, and enabled new independent sovereign states to emerge, eroding the strength of imperialism.

Since then the process of detente – the historical process of relaxing international tension and of creating conditions to prevent any return to the cold war era – has grown and gained new momentum. The meeting welcomes the Marxist-Leninist policy of peaceful co-existence between states with different social systems which has been purposefully pursued by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Our party considers

the recently held Helsinki Summit Conference on European Security and Co-operation to be of utmost importance in this process. Its decisions have worldwide significance and call for active efforts of all revolutionary and progressive forces to ensure their implementation.

As a party of the working class we are committed to furthering the process of international detente, and to making it irreversible. This requires the extension of political detente to military detente and the ending of the arms race. Stockpiling of weapons by the imperialist powers in the course of tje arms race, encourages the forces of aggression, militarism, fascism, neo-colonialism and apartheid, and endangers political detente itself.

Our party therefore regards the prohibition of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction, and the commencement of general and complete disarmament, as one of the most urgent international tasks. We therefore fully support proposals for the convening of a world Disarmament Conference, which could be an important step towards a reduction in armaments, and lead to general and complete disarmament.

While detente can create favourable conditions for the successful overthrow of oppressors by the oppressed, it is itself extended and strenthened by intensification of the struggles of the oppressed for freedom and national liberation. The general victories over United States imperialism achieved by the heroic peoples of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, assisted by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and by solidarity actions of progressive forces in all countries, are an important landmark in this direction. Our party salutes them for their courage and determination. We are pledged to work with our brother parties to support their present struggles for consolidation of people's power and the reconstruction of their countries, to create prosperous socialist societies. The triumph of the just cause of the peoples of Indochina facilitates the establishment of collective security in Asia.

Such positive shifts in the international arena naturally arouse attitudes of desperation amongst reactionary and aggressive circles in the imperialist countries. Imperialism seeks to regain its lost positions, encouraging the hotbeds of tension still existing in a number of countries, and the revival of fascism in others. There is therefore need for vigilance and for intensified struggle by the working class, the democratic progressive

forces, and the national liberation movements.

Capitalism is entering a deepening economic crisis, with declining production, slowing growth rate and increasing instability. The combination of galloping inflation with declining production throws onerous burdens on the working class in the capitalist countries and lowers their living standards. Curtailed production, rising prices and living costs, together with monetary and financial instability have engendered mass unemployment and given rise to ever wider strike movements. This sharpening class struggle aggravates the contradictions within the capitalist world, and brings new forces into the vanguard detachments which constitute the international communist movement.

The South African Communist Party welcomes the progressive changes which have taken place in Portugal, ushered in by the events of April 1974. These changes have laid the basis for the establishment of democracy in the country. We are, however, deeply concerned at attempts to reverse these changes, and particularly at the growing wave of internal counter-revolu tion which aims to discredit and destroy the battle-tested Communist Party of Portugal – the country's only genuine vehicle for the creation of a new society free from exploitation of man by man. We pledge our full support to the Communist Party of Portugal. We have no doubt that the conspiracies of imperialists and the CIA, as well as the intrigues of reactionaries who spread anti-communism in the hope of creating a favourable climate for the revival of fascism, are doomed to failure.

We applaud the growing successes of the peoples of Latin America in courageous struggles to rid their countries of internal reaction and of US imperialist domination.

We greet the coming Congress of the Cuban Communist Party which will recall to the minds of the oppressed in Latin America the rich and heroic experiences of the Cuban revolution which serves as a spur to peoples everywhere who struggle for human liberation and freedom.

The Franco regime in Spain grows increasingly unstable as the movement for democratic change advances. The struggle for a democratic Spain involves the most diverse political forces to demand radical changes in the economic, political and social life of their country. Our Party stands in solidarity with the anti-Franco democratic forces, confident that their cause will ultimately triumph.

The imperialist-CIA engineered coup which installed the fascist military junta in Chile is meeting with growing resistance from the people. The Chilean majority demonstrate through their growing unity in their anti-fascist struggles that the junta represents no more than the criminal anti-national and anti-patriotic elements in the country. Our party pays tribute to the undaunted courage and determination of Luis Corvalan and his comrades and calls for their immediate release from the junta's prisons.

The success of the Arab people during the 1973 October War in the Middle East was a setback for imperialism. Our party condemns the manoeuvres of US imperialism which constantly seek to break the unity of the Arab world and to turn Arab nations against the socialist countries, particularly against the USSR. The Kissinger 'step-by-step' policy is calculated to increase the US imperialist presence in the Middle East, and to secure new advantages for the aggressive Zionist leadership of Israel. Our party calls for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territory and for the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Victories scored by the peoples of Africa in struggles for national liberation have enhanced their possibilities of achieving economic independence. A number of African countries fighting against neo-colonial infiltration and against plunder of multi-national corporations are undertaking wide-ranging social and economic transformation. Their prospects of success are improved by the present change in the balance of world forces, and strengthened by disinterested support given by the socialist community to developing countries. Nevertheless, many African countries remain in the grip of neo-colonialism. The oppressed and exploited in these countries continue to struggle for genuine independence and for the creation of societies without poverty, hunger and disease.

In attempts to undermine struggles for real liberation and independence, imperialism and its local representatives resort increasingly to reactionary and anti-popular weapons of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. Their purpose is clearly to coerce these newly independent states into becoming appendages of the world socialist community. In those movements still struggling for national liberation, the encouragement of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism is an attempt to prevent the development of a real revolutionary leadership, and to

bring about a kind of 'liberation' in which the mass of the workers and peasants remain the victims of exploitation for the benefit of a small group of local exploiters working as agents of neo-colonialism.

The victorious wars of the people of the former Portuguese colonies for liberation from half a century of fascist rule have led to the independence of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Cape Verde Islands, Sao Tome and Principe, and the imminent independence of Angola and have thus paved the way for the total liberation of Southern Africa from colonialist and racist domination. The liberation of Mozambique and Angola has shattered one of the cornerstones of the unholy alliance of fascist Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia, and has engendered conditions for advancing our struggle inside South Africa to new heights. It is for this reason that the apartheid regime is now campaigning vigorously to promote its expansionist policy of 'dialogue' with the African states, and to improve its own image internally and internationally.

The racist regime has been weakened by the dramatic changes in Southern Africa and by renewed mass struggles of our own people. It is now more than ever necessary to intensify the international campaign against South Africa, to isolate those who seek to collaborate with apartheid for their own advantage, and to expose the fraudulent nature of the Bantustan programme and the 'reforms' cited by South African publicists in an attempt to confuse world opinion. The true leaders of South Africa's oppressed millions are not the heads of the regime's tribal and communal institutions. They are the leaders of the African National Congress and of our Party, many of whom have been incarcerated in Vorster's prisons for 12 years and more. The cry for their release must be raised with renewed vigour both inside and outside our country.

Our party greets the advances of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and supports the general demand by the masses for an immediate transfer of power to the majority.

We also express our solidarity with our comrades of SWAPO, whose leadership of their people's struggle has intensified mass popular action for seizure of political power.

We view with grave concern current developments in Angola, whose reactionary FNLA and UNITA forces, with the aid of US and French imperialism and the governments of Zaire and racist South Africa, attempt to reverse the gains which the

Angola people have made under the ladership of MPLA, their genuine and legitimate representative. Imperialism is determined to subvert Angolan independence and turn the country into another neo-colonial appendage. They seek to retain their domination of Angola so as to use it as a buffer zone to prevent the liberation of all Southern Africa, and as a springboard from which to launch intrigues against the independence of African countries.

Our party pledges its unequivocal support to MPLA, and calls on all progressive forces to undertake actions of solidarity with the people of Angola against the imperialist machinations there.

We regard as treacherous and criminal the support given by the Maoist leadership of the People's Republic of China to the counter revolutionary actions of FNLA forces against MPLA and the people of Angola. At a time when the people of Angola are engaged in popular resistance to some of the most vicious imperialist aggressions against African independence, the actions of the Chinese leadership constitute a deliberate attempt to reverse the progress of the anti-imperialist struggle in the whole African continent. This treacherous activity complements Chinese systematic and consistent support for the most reactionary imperialist circles in their intrigues against the progressive forces in many other parts of the world. Maoism thus reveals itself as a dangerous anti-communist, anti-Soviet and pro-imperialist policy.

The plenary meeting of our Central Committee makes an earnest appeal for the closing of ranks in the world progressive forces, and for the forging of solid unity in the common struggle against imperialism. In so doing, the meeting strongly condemns the foreign policy of the Maoist leadership of the Communist Party of China. whose rabid anti-Sovietism has guided it into the camp of reaction, and in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa has aligned it with imperialism's drive to divide the liberation movements through support for pseudo-revolutionary groups which are engaged in counter-revolutionary operations.

This meeting calls for an international meeting of Communist Parties. We believe that the current world situation makes the convening of such a meeting vital for the strengthening of all anti-imperialist forces in their important task of winning national independence, security and peace for all mankind.

Our party reiterates its continuing adherence to the Marzist-

Leninist principles of proletarian internationalism, of actively working for the unity of all forces in the common struggle against imperialism, and of strengthening the international communist movement.

Victory is certain.

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FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR STRUGGLE

The Central Committee of the South African Communist Party held discussions with members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union last November. After the meeting, the following joint communique was issued:

B.N. Ponomarev, Alternate member of the Political Bureau of the CC CPSU, Secretary of the CC CPSU, and R.A. Ulyanovski, Deputy Head of the CC CPSU International Department, met with a delegation of the South African Communist Party led by the SACP Chairman Y.M. Dadoo.

Representatives of the SACP described the activities of the South African Communists in mobilising the toiling masses in the struggle for the liquidation of the apartheid regime. They expressed their gratitude to the CPSU and the Soviet people for their constant assistance to, and support of, the South African patriotic forces and all fighters against imperialism, colonialism and racism. They expressed solidarity with the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), strongly condemned the policy of the Chinese leadership acting in concert with South African racists and other vicious enemies of the Angolan people.

Representatives of the CPSU described the enthusiasm with which the Soviet people are preparing for the 25th Congress of the CPSU, the successful fulfilment of the final year of the 9th five-year plan, and the implementation of the Peace programme. Communists and all the Soviet people firmly support the just struggle of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress. They demand the immediate release of Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Ahmed Kathrada, Walter Sisulu and other political prisoners languishing in the racists' jails.

The participants of the meeting declared that the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire and the upsurge of the national liberation movements in South Africa, Namibia and Rhodesia have created favourable conditions for the successful struggle against colonialism and racism on African soil.

The meeting was held in an atmosphere of fraternal friendship and mutual understanding.

THE CONGO ON THE ROAD TO SOCIALISM

by Sol Dubula

To assert that our continent is not outside history would not attract special notice but for the variety of theories we come across which, in effect, treat it as if it were. The class struggle is said either to be absent altogether or to be overshadowed and made irrelevant by different manifestations of the so-called "African personality". In some areas semi-feudal traditions; in others, the anachronism of tribal relationships; in yet others, religion, have become the inspiration for the strangest collection of doctrinal abominations which pass under names such as African socialism, Arab socialism, Muslim socialism and so on.

But the young Congolese Party of Labour believes passionately that Africa's peoples are subject to the same general laws of social development as all other peoples. For them there is only one valid ideological instrument - scientific socialism whose foundations were laid by Marx and Engels. They believe that in Africa, as elsewhere, the struggle for a higher social order will be fought out between contending economic classes and that the primary question at every given stage is: which class holds power? Without rejecting alliances, they believe that those which, in practice, exclude the existing or emerging expressions of the working people, do not advance the cause of socialism. And, in order to ensure that in the Congo the working people will become the dominant force, the CPL is attempting to mould itself as a workers' revolutionary vanguard party guided by Marxism-Leninism.

This is not to say that the CPL believes that the ways in Africa towards a society free of exploitation of man by man have nothing to do with a country's specific economic, cultural and social heritage. Marien N'Gouabi, chairman of the Central Committee of the CPL and president of the People's Republic of the Congo, stressed the connection between the universal and the particular when he said:

> "Marx's science is not a dogma, but an open book. Unfortunately this correct thought is often used to negate Marx and his science, to produce harmful and artificial constructions contrary to Marx's scientific theory. The African is the same as all other people, and the society in which he lives is subject to the same universal laws. Our various peoples lived and laboured in dissimilar conditions. Relying on the universal laws, we must therefore study the concrete phenomena in time and space, that is, apply the scientific approach. It is just as unscientific to ignore the specific situation as it is to negate science in general. That is why we, the peoples of black Africa, can also contribute to human knowledge, enriching rather than negating science.
>
> "We maintain that the future of the world, and of Africa, is associated with socialism. As we see it, therefore, the option today is not, in effect, between types of society but between the way and means of building a socialist society. *One can speak of African ways to socialism, but certainly not of an African socialism.* Then socialism will retain its scientific

character and at the same time take account of the specific conditions (that is, history, morality and customs, geography). This is no novel discovery. It was Lenin who said that all peoples will come to socialism – each in its own way and in different forms." *(My emphasis, S.D.)*

As a ruling party the CPL faces many-sided complexities and dilemmas because the Congo (like every other country in Africa) inherited a post-independence legacy of under-develop-

ment. It is faced too with the reality that despite growing public ownership the Congo's most important economic sectors remain essentially capitalist and are still dominated by imperialism. The economy as a whole is integrated into the world capitalist market and central planning is inevitably complicated by this fundamental fact. Whilst the Congo has a small but politically experienced and articulate working class (30% of the Congolese people live in the urban centres), the peasantry lives and works in primitive tribal subsistence conditions and its political consciousness is relatively low.

In such a situation it is crystal clear that the actual construction of socialism is not reasonably on the agenda as an immediate perspective. It is understandable why the CPL believes that the Congo is still faced with the task of completing the *National Democratic People's* revolution which only had its starting point when the French relinquished their direct political presence. The fact that the ruling party is guided in its actions by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism does not make the country socialist.

But the CPL also believes that advances in the struggle against neo-colonialism, for real independence and for the completion of the National Democratic revolution, depend upon which class or combination of classes holds political power. At this stage (as much as at the stage of the construction of socialism) a party representing the workers and peasants is a necessity and has a role to play throughout Africa. Experience in Africa has proved over and over again that talk of alliances and fronts between proletarian, semi-proletarian, peasantry, revolutionary intelligentsia and so on, can only have real meaning if the working people are able to express themselves organisationally and politically. Where this is not the case, where independent working class organisation is prohibited and trade unions are appendages of the state bureaucracy, the so-called alliance becomes the instrument of domination by a new exploiting group over the mass of the working people.

There are, of course, special problems facing a party, such as the CPL which is in the saddle of government in a state which is not yet socialist. Some of these will be referred to in a later article. The emergence of the CPL as the dominant political force in the Congo must be seen against the following historical background.

Before colonial rule established itself by an actual physical

presence, the Congo was part of that West African complex which provided one of the most fertile hunting grounds for slaves. The Kingdom of Bakongo was denuded by the Portuguese and Dutch slave expeditions and it is estimated that in the course of one century alone, approximately 150,000,000 souls were taken by force and transported to serve Western development needs. After that, by the end of the 18th century, direct colonial penetration followed. There was a long period of heroic resistance by the people which was eventually crushed by the imbalance of weaponry and technology. In the early phases of this colonisation, imperialism's presence was exercised by a combination of chartered companies, troops and the Catholic church. The best land was stolen from the people who were compelled to work it by a system of forced and semi-forced labour. Eventually (and partly as a result of excesses by the multi-national private companies which ruled the Congo) the French took over direct administrative control.

The contemporary class structure in the Congo had its beginnings during the colonial period. An urbanised working class and small rural proletariat was created. And, as in the rest of the African continent, privileged indigenous groups were created which served imperialism s administrative machine. Indeed, because Brazzaville became the main administrative capital of the French West African empire, the administrative elite from the Congo was relatively big and serviced and supported a large slice of the colonial apparatus in the whole region. This so-called 'evolue" who, in the post-Second World War period, were given relatively high political posts, began to enrich themselves through political activity which in turn opened the way for the growth of a small group of businessmen and others who served imperialism in a comprador capacity.

> Marien N'Gouabi summarises the class picture as follows: ". . . Colonialism created an urban and rural proletariat (through the policy of concessions) and at the same time spawned privileged classes – the bourgeoisie and the petit-bourgeoisie (bureaucratic, comprador and parliamentary) – connected with the old social strata and classes. This connection and resemblance is, amongst other things, clear evidence that pre-colonial society, too, had a class essence. So, as we see, Congolese society consists of classes, with some classes exploiting others, and the contradictions between them are antagonistic. But unlike many other African countries the

Congolese proletariat is conscious of being an exploited class and is therefore highly active on the political scene in order to change this state of affairs."

In 1959 the French handed over power to the main representative of these new privileged classes -- Abbot Youlou. Like his middle class detribalised counterparts in other parts of the continent, Youlou cultivated tribal sentiment in order to create his political power base. It was through Abbot Youlou (and the privileged groups which surrounded him) that French imperialism continued to exercise its dominance, no longer by direct presence but through collaboration with its local representatives.

The period 1959-1963 witnessed a relatively speedy disenchantment by the Congolese people with the kind of "independence" symbolised by Youlou. The class struggle grew in intensity. It reached its climax on 13th-15th August, 1963, when Africa experienced what was perhaps its first post-independence popular revolution. Defended by French army units which had occupied Brazzaville, Youlou's overthrow was the culmination of a mass upsurge led mainly by the organisations of the working class.

The immediate cause of the upsurge was an attempt by Youlou to dissolve opposition parties and to destroy the power and independence of the trade union movement. The trade unions and other mass organisations called for popular demonstrations of workers, unemployed and students (who were then on vacation). The arrest of the trade union leaders on August 13th led to a protest general strike in Brazzaville, Point Noire and Dolisie. The presidential palace was stormed by the people, the jailed Trade Union leaders were freed by mass force and the Youlou administration was overthrown. The provisional government which came to power faced a multitude of manoeuvres and intrigues by imperialism and its local representatives designed to turn back and destroy the gains of the August Revolution. To meet this challenge, the working class organisations and other progressive forces decided to set up a single mass party -- the National Revolutionary Movement – (NRM) which held its founding congress in Brazzaville in 1964.

From the outset the NRM proclaimed itself in favour of scientific socialism. But there was a clear gap between the reality and the rhetoric. Within this newly formed organisation fundamental differences emerged on issues such as which class

holds power and the strategy for carrying forward the revolution and developing the country. As in many other parts of Africa, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie was set on transforming the NRM into an amorphous mass movement which pretended to accommodate all the social groups but which in reality eliminated working class and trade union participation in politics. The leader of the right-wing, Massemba-Debat, made various attempts to eliminate the genuine progressive and revolutionary elements within the NRM. In the face of this attempt, the Congo experienced its second popular uprising in July 1968. A mass upsurge organised by a combination of progressive army men (President N'Gouabi was the most prominent), trade unions, youth, women's and other mass organisations, toppled the government of Massemba-Debat.

The political reassessment which followed led to the establishment in 1969 of the Congolese Party of Labour. The CPL regards itself as a working class party guided by Marxism-Leninism and standing at the head of the Congo's fight against imperialism and for the eventual establishment of a socialist society. It proclaims its world outlook as materialist and rejects all religious and other idealist world-outlooks as false. It recognises the existence both in the past and now of antagonistic social classes in the Congo and aims to conduct the struggle between these classes from the position of the working class.

More concretely the programme of the CPL sees the main contradiction in the Congo as being between

> "the revolutionary forces, including the working class which though numerically small and ideologically immature, is the pillar of the revolution: its ally, the peasantry, comprising a large but still unorganised group; and the still vacillating intermediate strata (petit bourgeoisie, the youth and students) . . . "

and

> "the reactionary forces, including international, and particularly French, imperialism and its Congolese allies, the bureaucratic and comprador bourgeoisie and the feudal element."

The state is seen as an instrument of class dictatorship and the CPL is dedicated to the destruction of the previous colonial and neo-colonial structures and replacing these by a government apparatus serving the mass of the people. The process of bringing about people's participation in government is being advanced through the Popular Councils elected directly by the

people. In the first elections in 1973, 68% of the electorate voted. Steps have also been taken to reorganise the various instruments of force – the police, the army and the courts – to serve the interests of the working people.

In the economic sphere the CPL aims to achieve eventual public ownership of all the means of production. Land is constitutionally proclaimed to be the property of all the people. All property that can serve society is earmarked for eventual nationalisation. Solidarity with liberation movements and co-operation with socialist countries is a vital point in the CPL's foreign policy.

But although the fundamental and conscious aim of the CPL is the abolition of all exploitation of man by man in the Congo, it sees the achievement of this as a long and difficult process. This was not always appreciated by every section of the CPL. In its early years there were still a number within its ranks who advocated leftist and adventuristic policies based on the argument that once the party espoused Marxism-Leninism as a guide to action the Congo was already a socialist country. The abortive coup by these elements in February 1972 underscored the need for a sharper definition of the stage through which the Congolese revolution was passing. A special congress was held in December 1972 and it accepted that the country was passing through the stage of National, Democratic and People's revolution.

Marien N'Gouabi says of this important congress:

> "Now the confusion was resolved: revolution means one class overthrowing another and assuming power, but it also means that revolutionary change is a long process. In the People's Republic of the Congo we shall have to resolve the main contradiction between the people and imperialism, before we can advance to the next stage, socialism."

He goes on to state that the revolution which is underway is *National* because its goal is to end French imperialist domination which still controls the national economy and therefore "factually controls also the political situation". It is *National* too because one of its goals at this stage is to create the objective and subjective conditions for the formation of a Congolese nation and to rid the country of tribalism and regionalism. The revolution is *Democratic* because it replaces minority rule and because it draws its support from the masses. It is a *People's* revolution because it is attempting to create the foundations

for the next stage, the socialist revolution, and is preparing all the prerequisites for this by mobilising the masses under the banner of the proletariat and its vanguard the Congolese Party of Labour.

> "In other words, at the present stage of the national liberation struggle, at the stage of national, democratic and people's revolution, all our activities must rest on alliance of the revolutionary classes and patriotic forces within a united anti-imperialist front. Its purpose is to mobilise the broad masses on the basis of their interests, and unite, under the leadership of the working class party, the CPL, the women, youth, peasants, small tradesmen and artisans, as well as trade unions, religious groups and cultural associations."

This brief outline of the proclaimed aims of the CPL shows not only that it is committed to marxist ideology in general but also that an attempt is being made to find Marxist solutions to the specific problems of the Congolese road to socialism. The leaders of the CPL are the first to admit that there are no easy solutions. Indeed one is impressed by the modesty of their claims, their awareness that the road ahead is hard and complex and a recognition that there are many problems which still have to be resolved in the course of revolutionary practice.

Perhaps one of the most complex questions facing Marxists in newly independent states which are still in the economic grip of imperialism, is the relationship between the struggle against foreign domination and the internal class struggle. On the one hand there is the need to mobilise the broadest possible alliance in the interests of achieving a true national independence. On the other hand there is the obvious danger that in such an alliance the vital internal social struggles may be postponed or relegated into the background with the result that a new internal exploiting class becomes the beneficiary of the people's sacrifices. The CPL is conscious that in the Congo the "struggle against imperialism, which is regarded as the principal enemy of the Congolese people, must not overshadow the struggle against the exploiter classes within the country". (Marien N'Gouabi) An assessment of the way in which the CPL is in practice attempting to achieve a balance between these two foundations of its immediate policy, is beyond the scope of this article. (All quotations from Marien N'Gouabi are from "Scientific Socialism in Africa". *African Agenda*, June-July 1975.)

SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNISTS VISIT CONGO

At the invitation of the Congolese Workers' Party, a delegation of the South African Communist Party, led by its chairman, comrade Y.M. Dadoo, was in the People's Republic of the Congo on a friendly visit from 4 to 8 November, 1975.

During its visit, the delegation had fruitful discussions with a delegation of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Congolese Workers' Party, led by comrade Pierre N'Ze member of the Political Bureau and Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the Central Committee, and was received by comrade Marien N'Gouabi, chairman of the Central Committee of the Congolese Workers' Party, President of the Council of State, and Head of State.

In the course of these discussions, which took place in an atmosphere of full mutual understanding, militant frankness and comradeship, the two delegations examined problems affecting not only the broad masses of the people of their respective countries but also the international situation and the struggle of the peoples for independence, freedom, justice and peace.

The two parties renewed their unreserved support for the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East in their struggle to regain national independence and to safeguard their sovereignty and their territorial integrity, and affirmed an unswerving belief in their victory.

The two parties noted with satisfaction the world-wide progress of socialism, of the liberation movements and of the working class. They noted the effectiveness of the united struggle of these forces against colonialism, imperialism, racism and Zionism.

With particular reference to Angola, whose people are preparing themselves to seize their independence at the cost of heavy sacrifices, the two parties renewed their firm support for the fraternal people of Angola and their worthy representative, the MPLA, and condemned the manoeuvres of the imperialists and their local puppets who are seeking to prevent the people from achieving true independence.

The delegation of the SACP gave extensive information about the legitimate struggle of the South African people to regain its rights and to achieve a normal life in a homeland which has been usurped by colonialism of a special type – the racist minority regime of apartheid. In this connection, the delegation of the SACP greatly appreciates the constant support which the Congolese Workers' Party and the Congolese people, led by Comrade Marien N'Gouabi, have always given to the peoples' struggles in general and to that of South Africa in particular.

On its side, the Congolese Workers' Party informed the delegation of the SACP of the implementation of its programme, adopted by its Second Congress, especially in the economic and social fields, in the organisation of the Party and in the education of the masses with a view to raising their class consciousness and their ideological level.

The two parties congratulated themselves on the results of this visit. They agreed to develop contacts between the two parties, in order to know each other better and to assist each other within the framework of proletarian internationalism and

the struggles of the African working class. For this purpose, the two parties recognised that only scientific socialism will liberate the African peoples and working class from the shameful system of exploitation of man by man.

In the course of its stay in the Congolese People's Republic, the delegation of the SACP visited certain production units in Brazzaville and Point-Noire. It noted with satisfaction the achievements of the Congolese People's Republic under the leadership of the Congolese Workers' Party and valued the contacts made with the workers and managers of these enterprises. It thanks the Congolese Workers' Party and the Congolese people for the warm and fraternal welcome accorded to it during its stay in the Congolese People's Republic.

Signed at Brazzaville, 7 November, 1975.

For the delegation of the SACP
Y.M. Dadoo
Chairman.

For the Congolese Workers' Party
Pierre N'Ze
Member of the Political Bureau
Secretary of Foreign Affairs to the
Central Committee.

THE GOLDEN KEY

by Phineas Malinga

Gold has played, and is playing, a central role in the greatest crisis that has hit capitalism since 1930. As a result, South Africa is far more important to world capitalism than other countries of comparable size and economic development.

The early stages of the crisis have already been analysed in this journal by the late Comrade Palme Dutt ('The Crisis of the World Capitalist Economy', *The African Communist* No. 48, p. 37). He pointed out that the relative stability of capitalism is the period 1945-1970 was based upon the domination of the dollar. United States currency was acceptable throughout the world as an international medium of exchange. The artificial freezing of the price of gold was accepted by everyone except the producers of gold (whose protests were swept aside) because it was taken for granted that dollars were just as secure a store of value as gold itself.

This system had certain important advantages. Because the supply of dollars could be increased as required, international trade could expand more freely than ever before. Shortages of liquidity did not readily arise and the cycle of boom and slump changed its characteristics in certain respects. Indeed, the

capitalists fondly imagined that the days of slump were gone forever.

If the United States monetary authorities had regulated the supply of dollars so as exactly to meet the requirements of world trade, the system might have lasted much longer than it did. But, of course, the United States monetary authorities were concerned, not with the long-term interests of the capitalist world, but with the short-term interests of the United States. They abused their power of creating international money. They poured out dollars to finance overseas military expenditure and to buy up capital assets in other countries, without any regard for the real wealth available to back up these dollars. The result was an American balance of payments deficit which increased rapidly from the middle fifties onwards. The other capitalist countries became increasingly uneasy. They realised, on the one hand, that by the mere operation of the printing press, the Americans were acquiring the ability to buy up key sectors of the economies of all other capitalist countries, and, on the other hand, that the masses of paper money being acquired by other countries in exchange for their real assets were of increasingly doubtful long-term value. Central banks therefore became increasingly interested in exchanging some of their dollar holdings for gold. Between 1949 and 1971 , US gold stocks decreased from 24.6 billion dollars to 10.3 billion. By that time, however, dollar balances held overseas totalled 50 billion dollars, so that the US gold reserves could have been wiped out at any moment, if a rush to convert into gold had occurred.

Such a situation could not endure. The attempt to shore up the system, from 1968 to 1971, by means of the 'two-tier' gold market was doomed to failure. Under this system, central banks continued to exchange gold at $35 to the ounce, while all other purchasers and sellers dealt on a free market. The result was a gradually widening gap between the official and free market prices which merely served to spell out the underlying problem for all to see. Inevitably, therefore, the day came (August 15, 1971) when the US government had to refuse to change any more dollars into gold at $35 per ounce.

In order to explain this action away, the Americans invented an elaborate myth to the effect that what they were doing was 'demonetising' gold, because it was a barbarous and outdated thing which had no place in a modern economic system. Gold, we were told, was now going to be used only for jewellery and

filling teeth. Its price might just as easily drop below $35 as rise above that figure. The world monetary system would go from strength to strength, based exclusively on the paper dollar and a new kind of super paper dollar, backed by the International Monetary Fund and rejoicing in the name of Special Drawing Right.

The governments and central banks of West Germany, Japan, Britain, Italy and the majority of capitalist countries loyally proclaimed their belief in all this. Whether they really believed it or were motivated by simple fears of the consequences of an open break with America, we cannot say. At all events, a seemingly invincible phalanx of economic power was brought into line behind the 'demonetisation' policy.

Yet the results were uniformly disappointing. The post-war system of fixed exchange rates between national currencies immediately collapsed. Inflation rates increased throughout the capitalist world. Individual members of the bourgeoisie, far from accepting that gold was now useful only for jewellery and filling teeth, began to buy gold coins in quantities that had not been seen since gold coins went out of everyday circulation in the early thirties. The gold price, though experiencing considerable fluctuations, showed a generally rising trend which took it beyond the figure of $175 per ounce suggested by the French economist Ruess (whom the Americans tried to dismiss as a mere eccentric).

In September 1975, the Americans played what they hoped would be a trump card. They pushed through a meeting of the International Monetary Fund a set of proposals on gold. Firstly, in line with the 'demonetisation' theory, the amount of gold held by the IMF in its reserves was to be reduced. Secondly, in an attempt to depress the market price, a scheme for gold sales by the IMF was approved in principle (though it is still not certain whether the sales will ever actually take place). Thirdly, in order to secure French agreement to the first two proposals, the ban on purchases of gold by central banks, imposed in 1971, was lifted.

Neither economic commentators nor the market have found it easy to decide what all this adds up to. The US Secretary of the Treasury, William Simon, has described it as a step towards "the gradual phasing of gold out of the system." The Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, on the other hand, has said that it "clearly has the effect of giving gold an increasing and

more meaningful monetary role." The market price dropped heavily around the time of the IMF announcement, but has since recovered some of the losses. Among those who have expressed confidence about a further recovery in the price is the Moscow Narodny Bank.

Obviously there are further rounds to be fought in the struggle between gold and the dollar and nobody can predict exactly how the battle will go in the short term. To attempt a basic analysis, however, we must see this question in conjunction with the other major economic event in the capitalist world since 1971, that is, the occurrence of the most serious depression since 1929.

The present depression baffles analysis by bourgeois economists. The phenomena which it presents seem totally paradoxical. Inflation and depression have been thought of as opposites, but now they coincide. Capitalist trade and production are being throttled by a classic shortage of liquidity, at the same time as a surplus of paper money causes a continuing slide in the value of that money. At the very moment when the paper dollar, freed from all dependence on gold, marches towards its final enthronement, the main achievement of the Dollar Age falls to pieces.

So long as one works on the assumption that our existing paper currencies are real money, no explanation emerges. Marxism, however, points out that no such assumption can be made. Comrade Palme Dutt wrote, in the article to which reference has already been made:–

> ". . . The final standard of value, also at the heart of these structures, inevitably remains gold, because, as Marx long ago demonstrated, in a society based on commodity relations the function of a universal equivalent to express the value of all commodities can only be fulfilled by a substance which itself has its own independent value as a commodity before it comes to be used as a universal equivalent or money, and that for reasons familiar in every text book gold has come to fulfil this role. However complex the token structure built on this foundation, appearing to displace gold as an archaic remnant no longer applicable to modern conditions, and needing to be replaced by some more logical structure, this metallic foundation reveals itself anew in every situation of crisis of

capitalism. In the words of Marx:

> Capitalist production forever strives to overcome this metallic barrier, the material and fantastic barrier of wealth and its movements, in proportion as the credit system develops, but forever breaks its head on this same barrier.
> (Marx, *Capital*, vol.3, ch.xxxv, Section I, English edition p.6 4)"

The explanation of the present situation may then be this: the various manoeuvres with paper money, recommended by Keynes to cure cyclical depression, work up to a point because they can expand the money supply up to a point. When, however, the quantity of paper money in circulation becomes too much greater than its gold backing, the whole system comes adrift. The paper money – rapidly depreciating in value – becomes incapable of fully discharging the function of money. No matter how much further its volume is increased, the shortage of *real* money becomes the decisive factor. The postponed depression therefore arrives, and can no longer be cured by Keynesian remedies.

These are matters which require further research, but one thing is clear – the present general disarray of the capitalist economy does not suggest that the post-1971 attempts by the USA to perpetuate and complete the world domination of the dollar are about to be crowned by success. That gold will have the last word now seems virtually certain.

EFFECTS ON SOUTH AFRICA

The increase in the gold price has been of vital importance for South Africa. The mining industry has been able to cut production from 909 tons in 1972 to 758 tons in 1974, but over the same period the value of gold exports rose from R1,161 million to R2,565 million. Non-gold exports increased comparatively modestly from R2,296 million to R3,164 million. Thus it has been mainly the rising gold price which has enabled South Africa to increase imports from R2,852 million in 1972 to a staggering R5,737 in 1974. Here is the reason why South Africa, almost alone in the capitalist world, has been able to absorb the increase in oil prices without difficulty. Here also is

the source of South Africa's ability to push military expenditure to new heights every year.

For the mineowner, however, the price rise has produced only a brief bonanza which was already beginning to fade even before the recent setback in the gold price. The reason has been inflation, producing large increases in mining costs. The cost of living has risen by 6½% in 1972, 9½% in 1973 and nearly 14% in 1974. Wage rises have accordingly had to be conceded. Energy costs have risen even more steeply. As a result, the profits of most mines have shown a falling trend from quarter to quarter of 1975. For the September quarter, several old mines which had been rescued from shutdown by the price increase were once again returning losses.

This is why the recent downturn in the gold price, though quite modest by comparison with the earlier rise, has been a serious matter for South Africa. The recent 17.9% devaluation of the rand is the direct consequence. Expressed in the conventional language of bourgeois economics, the object of the devaluation is to restore the profitability of the gold mines by increasing the rand price of gold. The current dollar price of approximately $140 per ounce now represents the same number of rands as the dollar price ruling towards the end of 1974, of approximately $180 per ounce. To the extent that the costs of the industry are expressed in rands, the difference will represent pure profit.

But, of course, not all the industry's costs have a constant level in South African currency. Oil must be bought for dollars and mining machinery for deutschmarks. Interest on overseas loans must be paid in the currency of the lender. Labour costs, however, are expressed in rands and the hope of the mining bosses is that they will be able to go on paying their workers the same number of rands as they did before. In essence, therefore, the devaluation is a move to restore the profitability of the mines by cutting the real value of the wages which they pay.

The days are past, however, when the South African ruling class could take it for granted that they would get away with such a manoeuvre. Even their formidable machinery of repression has already proved inadequate to hold wages down in the climate of inflation that has recently existed in South Africa. The devaluation will inevitably lead to further labour militancy. If wage increases are granted, the whole object of the devaluation will be defeated. If they are refused, unrest is likely to reach

boiling point.

The future trend of the gold price is therefore crucial. For the reasons discussed in the first part of the article, the price may well recover, giving South African capitalism another of the lucky breaks for which it is famous. If it does not, the day of reckoning will be that much nearer.

When that day of reckoning comes, it will not only mean the liberation of the South African people from a bloodstained fascist tyranny, but also the crumbling of a keystone in the arch of world capitalism's economic structure.

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Black Bankers- Friends or Enemies of Liberation?

by Toussaint

The South African business community and press have recently given much space and time to hailing the formation of what is described as the "first black bank". The fanfare has been somewhat disproportionate to the actual size of the venture. It has been described by black spokesmen and white as "a breakthrough", though there has been little explanation of what it breaks through to. Anywhere else in the modern world, the launching of a piddling R1 million bank would be a non-event, but here it is being seen as a milestone towards some undefined new future for the country's black majority. The exclusively black National African Federated Chambers of Commerce (NAFCO) claims that this is . . . "the first company of its kind

in South Africa. Blacks are holding the majority shares and this will set a new pattern in South Africa." The exclusively white Registrar of Financial Institutions claims that the bank would . . . "give these people the opportunity of realising their aspirations with regard to banking." South Africans have a capacity for self-deception; it is better to look at the facts than the forecasts in order to assess the significance of this 'breakthrough'.

First, how black is black? Of the initial capital of the bank, about half has been subscribed by black shareholders, the other half being divided between the 'big five' established banks – (Barclays, Standard, Volkskas, Nedbank and Trust) who have subscribed approximately 30%, and the Bantustan 'governments' who subscribed the rest. The Board of Directors has seven blacks appointed by NAFCO, three whites appointed by the banks, and a white manager chosen, so we are told, from 80 applicants, some of them blacks with "good qualifications". The bank president, Mr. S. Motsuenyane, in telling us that, adds that . . . "This bank carries the hopes of the black people and cannot be allowed to fail. For that reason an efficient white man was chosen" (*Star* 30.4.75) and that the bank is . . . "the first example of white leadership with black control" (*Star* 29.6.74). In another somewhat elliptical statement he explained that . . . "it took both black and white to build the country's prosperity – and it took the white man's money. It must now take both black and white to build the black man's economy. Much as we want the bank to be black, we cannot exclude the whites."

But in this special South-African style co-partnership, how will the bank operate? It has opened its first two branches in Soweto – the black dormitory town without commerce or industry, which accommodates Johannesburg's black working population fifteen miles outside the town boundaries – and at Ga-Rankuwa, which does not appear on most maps of the country, being a village in the Bophutatswana Bantustan. These locations well outside the centres – or even the periphery – of established banking or trade, effectively cut the bank off from the reach of white depositors, although manager Wentzel explains hopefully that . . . "In terms of the Group Areas Act we would not be able to operate in a white area. This will certainly make it very difficult for a white depositor to conduct a savings account with us – but there is no reason why he could not hold a fixed deposit." None at all, except hard business logic. The

'black' bank will be seriously handicapped, some would say mortally crippled, as a safe deposit for funds by the operation of the apartheid system, which virtually excludes freehold ownership or even long-term secure tenure by blacks of farms or buildings on land, most of which is on lease from the state or para-statal agencies. The bank, it is said, is considering the prospects of lending money on the security of such leases which are themselves insecure, or alternatively on the security of guarantees from the borrower's employer.

It is difficult, then, to share the enthusiasm for the bank's prospects of growth which its sponsors radiate. But whether their optimism is soundly financially based is not the point of this article. More important to us than the bank's business future is its significance as some sort of a 'breakthrough' of the black majority into the tightly closed monopoly of white power in South Africa. It is being suggested by the embryonic group of African bourgeois who constitute the membership of NAFCO that the black people can achieve their aspirations by way of business growth, and that the economic growth of a black bourgeoisie can provide a more orderly and fruitful path towards equality with the white minority than can political struggle. Their theory fits neatly with the whole Bantustan concept, whether they intend it to or not. It implies that the aspirations of black people can be met without struggle against the white state, through the simple process of gathering in its own cash resources, building up its own (and for practical purposes segregated) capitalist institutions, and thus growing into equality parallel to and alongside the existing white economic and political power structure – an economic Bantustan commercial-state concept to dovetail neatly with the political Bantustan 'homelands' concept. It is not possible to dismiss this theory merely by showing that, in today's state of development, black capitalist enterprise is a puny weakling overshadowed by the giant growths of white South African capitalism. Perhaps these are small beginnings. But what can they become? Can they really meaningfully alter the way of life of the black majority, now or in the future, and so gain the demands of the national liberation movement without a direct confrontation?

Doubtless to the directors and large shareholders in the first 'black' bank, black banking *is* fundamentally different from 'white'; it provides them with an opportunity for earning profit

and interest not previously possible, and it gives to that lucky few a new social status as 'capitalist', 'bourgeois'. But will anyone else amongst the black citizens of South Africa feel any difference, or achieve anything at all from this new venture? It is impossible to believe that they will, no matter how well the affairs of the bank prosper. For the rest of the population, 'black' banking is nothing more than another capitalist enterprise, operating in the manner of capitalism – that is to say, creating rent, profit and interest for the possessors of capital, through the exploitation of the labour of those who have nothing to sell except their capacity to work. Capital is not an idea or a state of mind, to be applied benevolently or harshly at the whim of its owner. It is an economic category, a form of wealth which enters into the process of society's production of its goods in accordance with economic laws. Being 'black' capital makes it neither more lenient nor more liberal than 'white' capital, no less hungry for interest and profit, no less bound by economic law to seek the greatest rate of return through the highest rate of exploitation. For those interested only in the equations of colour, then, 'black' banking may represent another small step in the entry of black people into fields thus far exclusively white. But beyond this, 'black' banking remains banking; 'black' capital remains capital; and the process by which capital exploits the overwhelming majority of the South African people remains unaffected.

This is the reality. But the *idea* of 'black' banking and of 'black' capitalism does serve a purpose – the purpose of advertising a product by concealing its reality. Coca Cola advertises its wares as "The real thing!" and ignores the reality of vast private profit and widespread public tooth decay. Rothmans project their products as sources of satisfaction, virility, well-being, not of lung cancer. Capitalism sells itself to the working class – even those whom it exploits directly – by equally deceptive sloganising which obscures the reality. It is, we are told, "Free enterprise", though everywhere price-fixing, cartels, rings and secret deals stifle enterprise in favour of a monopolised status quo. It is described as "the incentive system" even while employers gang up to keep wages down and to drive competitors to bankruptcy. To speak of 'black' capital as though it were different from the old, exploiting capitalism of yesterday is just as deceptive, just as blatantly advertising, just as fraudulent. It is

an attempt to persuade black people that – if "black is beautiful" then black banking must be beautiful. It is a way to sell capitalism to a black audience by hiding its known and ugly face, profiteering, exploitation and mass impoverishment, in a fine new box; in just this way in supermarkets everywhere in the capitalist world old rubbish is constantly re-packaged for sale in brighter boxes proclaiming "New!" "Improved!" "Better Deal!"

The swindle still works. People are still deceived, and some – often well-intentioned – get persuaded by the propaganda. In the ranks especially of the businessmen who form the membership of NAFCO – generally small traders and merchants who have overcome all the difficulties of apartheid South Africa to become petty capitalists – and even in the ranks of some of the African intelligentsia capitalism *is* beginning to sell. The theory *is* beginning to be held that the cause of national liberation is advanced by making black capitalists, by accumulating black capital, by sponsoring black businesses from which somehow, sometime, the whole nation will gain.

The theory is neither new nor peculiar to South Africa. In one guise or another it has emerged in almost every nationally oppressed community as its first bourgeoisie grew up. In the United States of America it gave rise to the deliberate sponsorship of black business enterprise, so that today it constitutes a fairly sizeable slice of American business, including banking, insurance, publishing and so on. There is little evidence that any benefits of the process have washed off on to the black masses generally, or that the prospects of national equality have been materially bettered. While the black bourgeoisie have risen to levels of substantial wealth, comfort, and social status, the majority of the blacks remain as ghetto-ridden and impoverished as ever, still filling the worst jobs, receiving the worst education, topping the figures for unemployment, crime and illiteracy. The evidence shows not that black capitalism has raised the nation, but rather that it has enabled the black bourgeoisie to rise from the level of the masses rather than with them.

Perhaps we are judging the American experience too soon? Perhaps – or so it is argued – the American blacks are more downtrodden than the whites because as yet America's black bourgeoisie have not reached equality with whites who still control the commanding heights of the country's finance and

industry. For justification then of the theory, it is necessary not just that blacks advance economically in the field of capitalist enterprise, but that they achieve parity with whites.

Can such a prospect be realistically envisaged? Whatever theorists may say about the USA – and that is not the subject matter of this article – the prospect can scarcely be entertained in South Africa. The black bourgeoisie do not merely start late in the race to acquire capital – that in itself could perhaps be made up for by running harder. But they enter the race impossibly handicapped. They can, for example, only enter the race from premises established in the most underdeveloped parts of the country, remote from all the main urban centres. (Group Areas legislation.) They cannot own, buy or pledge land as security to raise finance. (Land Act.) They cannot influence the policies of national, provincial or local authorities to remove disabilities in the way of their growth. (The voting and public representation laws.) They cannot travel freely (Pass laws), receive first-grade education (Bantu Education Act), learn or enter reserved skilled trades (Industrial Colour Bar laws), and so on, through the host of minor difficulties, prohibitions and bars which together make up the apartheid system, within which the race has to be run.

These are special disabilities, South African disabilities. But even if all these special South African disabilities ceased to operate, could be sidestepped by astute operators, or were overlooked by tolerant authorities – even if all this disappeared, is parity between white and black capital feasible? Can NAFCO – or anyone else – mastermind the accumulation of capital in black hands on a scale which could compare with the present accumulation in white hands?

The process by which capital accumulates has been studied and described by economists, particularly by Karl Marx in his work titled *Capital.* The early capital accumulations of the European bourgeoisie were made in a variety of ways – through piracy and theft, through slave-trading and war looting, by expropriation of feudal coffers and by war-time profiteering. The white bourgeoisie of South Africa accumulated its capital somewhat differently in detail, yet by much the same process in essence. On the one hand it inherited or transferred from Europe some part of the accumulated capital acquired as summarised above; on the other hand it appropriated to itself the whole of

the land – except for that unwanted 13% into which the black rural population were confined. Through war, seizure, conquest, unequal treaty-swindles and swindling purchases, it appropriated to itself all the known resources of minerals and metals, all the ports, all the commercially significant rivers. The economic map of South Africa was thus drawn by the process of early capital accumulation – even though it is now constantly argued by the government and the establishment that the boundaries of 'black' areas and 'white' were drawn by tradition, not by acquisition.

That process of early accumulation of capital is finished. A chapter is closed and a new chapter entered upon, in which the capital accumulated in this first phase has grown and multiplied in the way of capitalist growth, through exploitation. The new black would-be bourgeois enter into the accumulation game only in this second phase. The appropriation of all the pre-capitalist wealth of society has been completed without their participation. None of the natural wealth of the country outside those pockets of poverty which constitute the 13% of the land reserved is any longer up for grabs. Thus the black bourgeoisie enter the capitalist arena without heavy accumulations of capital, with only their personal savings and unspent earnings as their starting point – in which case parity with the white bourgeoisie is far beyond their reach, even after our lifetimes. The only other course would be to try and repeat history – try and accumulate capital by appropriating it through seizure and strength; to expropriate the white bourgeoisie. Such a process is inconceivable without force and violent struggle. It is, in fact, the very antithesis of the path of slow accumulation, petty profit-taking and growth, which characterises the ideology of NAFCO and its members. It is for this reason and through recognition of the total unreality of ever 'growing into parity' with the white bourgeoisie, that the embryonic black bourgeois groups adopt such timid attitudes towards the white establishment. They have, realistically, to settle for what they can get; which is, at best, a very very junior partnership – if it is partnership at all.

There are, however, in these early attempts to raise a bourgeoisie as a deliberate, 'national' task, echoes of the history of the Afrikaner national movement in the days of *its* inferiority. Simpletons looking at the way in which the Afrikaner bourgeoisie raised themselves from similar extremely subordinate

positions to the British bourgeoisie of South Africa, imagine the process can be repeated by the blacks. The Afrikaner nationalist movement established what it called Reddingsdaad (Act of Salvation) committees to raise funds to promote the national cause – initially half a million pounds to be used for the uplift of the so-called 'sunken descendants' of the nation. In 1939 the politicians of the Nationalist Party extended the aim to the promotion of capitalist enterprises in order to further the 'economic independence' of the Afrikaner. Even the words echo the black bourgeoisie's statements of today: "If we want to achieve success we must use the technique of capitalism", Dr. M.S. Louw told the National Economic Conference of 1939. "We must establish something like the finance houses of Johannesburg." It was under this impetus that a number of Afrikaner capitalist concerns began – Sanlam in insurance, Volkskas in banking, and others in commerce and industry. Today these have emerged among the giants of the South African capitalist scene, approaching parity with the British based giants as they had aimed to do.

This experience is misleading for the black bourgeoisie. The growth of Afrikaner capitalism to the stage where it now shares and merges with the former British giants has not been a matter of simple economic growth. Until the Afrikaner nationalists achieved political power, the Afrikaner capitalists remained very much junior partners. It was political power which opened the gates for the Afrikaner bourgeoisie to advance towards economic parity, not the other way about. Volkskas grew through the deliberate political channeling of state, provincial and municipal business towards it, not through the painstaking gathering in of the accumulated savings and small riches of the faithful supporters of the Afrikaner cause. So too with other politically sponsored Afrikaner business – Sanlam, Volkshemde etc. Political power and patronage, often political arm-twisting and bludgeoning, have helped the Afrikaner bourgeoisie to economic power.

The black bourgeois elements who seek the keys to the kingdom of capitalist growth cannot ignore this example so insistently around them. It is a double-edged example. On the one hand, it serves to remind black business-men that simple concentration on economic growth cannot, of itself, solve the aspirations of the African people for full equality in every aspect

of life; and therefore reminds them that the struggle for national political liberation comes first. On the other hand, it moves some to seek to get their own hands on the levers of existing political power, to move into the drivers' seats of the white-dominated state, rather than to try to overturn it.

It is for this second reason that several of the rising black businessmen are beginning to turn away from the national struggle, seeking to master positions of influence and authority within the Bantustans; for there at least, they have persuaded themselves, some of the controls of local political power can be delivered into their hands, and used for their own economic purposes.

There are thus two sides to the picture of developing black capitalist enterprise. Not only does the mere establishment of a 'black' bank help the government to prove that it is really guiding the black majority towards 'nationhood', with a bevy of black bankers as economic evidence parallel to the black 'statesmen as political evidence of the reality of Bantustans. But the growth of this black bourgeoisie brings into being a group willing and indeed anxious to operate within the Bantustan establishment, and from there – it is hoped – stake a claim to lead the nation – a claim which today devolves undeniably on the African National Congress and its allies in the liberation movement.

The emergence of a vocal bourgeois grouping going-it-alone outside the main stream of the national movement signals the need for the national movement to clarify its long-term aims beyond the stage thus far reached in South Africa. Up to now, the national movement has spoken for, and represented, the aspirations of all classes within the ranks of the oppressed; its aims have been clear and sufficient – to abolish every vestige of race discrimination in the national life, and to win full equality of opportunity for all citizens. As the assemblage of the whole nation, the economic aims of the national movement have always been those to which every class grouping could subscribe – workers, peasants, and bourgeois alike – equality and the abolition of colour discrimination. For a time, that simple formulation was enough.

But with each growth of the movement, more precision was essential. How, for example, would the ending of colour bars be able to set right the historic injustice to the blacks of the white

seizure of 87% of the land? How could the abolition of colour barriers reverse the historic injustice inherent in the white monopoly of all known gold and diamond bearing areas? Once national liberation moved from a dream of visionaries to a practical prospect which could be realised 'in our lifetime', these and similar problems demanded precise definition. The Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955, answered some of those demands in a new way. The land, it declared, would be shared amongst those who worked on it. Mines and other monopoly industries would be nationalised. For the moment it seemed to be enough. It still left undefined, undebated, the question of what sort of social and economic order would be built in the new, liberated South Africa.

That question – what type of society? Capitalist or socialist? – is now being raised sharply, not from the left but from the right. This is, in essence, the issue which NAFCO and others are posing today. They promote their own immediate self-advancement, and the desirability of their class grasping the levers of power within the Bantustans impliedly – sometimes explicitly – as a programme for the nation. Capitalism? Or socialism? It is an issue which has now been raised within the oppressed nation's ranks, and which will grow sharper as time goes on.

For it is in the nature of struggle that its development throws up new critical problems at every stage, and forces first their consideration and next their disposition. It has been so in our movement with, for example, the issues of strategy, of violent and non-violent forms of struggle. We have made the transition from exclusively non-violent forms to the use and promotion of violent forms. That debate is behind us; we are now being faced with new problems arising from the solution of the old. The new problems of HOW – how to achieve equality within the liberated society; of HOW to ensure to men the fruits of their labour, and the righting of historic injustice; of HOW to organise the work and wealth and direction of a free South Africa, so as to make real those freedoms of education, of movement, of work and culture of which the Freedom Charter speaks so eloquently. These problems of HOW are rising to the forefront of our movement, and will have to be resolved.

It is not a matter of abstract debate, to be settled in academic discussion outside the ongoing political battles of the national movement. Ours is not the first movement to have to face such problems. In our neighbouring territory of Mozambique, Frelimo

too had to face and resolve the questions of the basic directions of its state, its basic orientation, as soon as its first liberated areas were won. Immediately, the problems of how to teach, what to teach, for what purpose, to what social ends, moved from the abstract to the plane of immediate and practical politics. Decisions had to be debated, fought out and resolved, not by abstract assessment of which system would be better, fairer, more just, but in the practical, concrete tasks of reconstructing society anew.

The issue of socialism or capitalism, as the future direction of our people and our country, is not for us either an abstract issue. It is part of the very essence of our national movement, as decisive for the future as the question of violence or non-violence, of co-operation or confrontation with the government, of compromise or struggle.

And the more sharply NAFCO and others raise the issue, the more it becomes apparent that the aims of the national movement in South Africa must be sharpened and clarified. The Freedom Charter made it quite plain that "the people shall share in the country's wealth". The national wealth of the country, the heritage of all South Africans, would be restored to the people, it pledged, and added, significantly for our budding black bankers, "the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole". But there remained an ambiguity as to the extent to which private enterprise would be allowed to continue.

The programme of the Communist Party adopted in 1962 was more explicit. The national revolution in South Africa, it stated, would "restore the land and wealth of the country to the people". But the Party realised that more than this would be needed to put an end to the exploitation of man by man, and the programme added: "The destruction of colonialism and the winning of national freedom is the essential condition and key for the future advance to the supreme aim of the Communist Party: the establishment of a socialist South Africa, laying the foundation of a classless, communist society".

Now that the Nationalist Government is trying to promote the development of a class of bourgeois blacks who will profit from the implementation of the Bantustan programme, it becomes more necessary than ever before to explain just why

the development of this kind of black bourgeoisie constitutes a challenge to the national revolution in South Africa.

AFRICANISATION & CLASS STRUGGLE

by D.S. Sisacho

It is almost impossible to say anything proper about Africanisation without touching on such questions as national liberation and classes, the state, the nation and the classes and struggles therein, decolonisation, neo-colonialism and socialism, the basis and superstructure, the national bourgeoisie and national petty bourgeoisie, in short production relations.

The historical roots of the concept or practice of Africanisation lie in the decolonisation process itself which was ushered in by the colonised people, mainly after the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917 in Russia. The pace of the process was to be speeded up by the emergence of the socialist system and gained additional momentum after the rout of fascism in Europe and Asia in 1945. The growing might and presence of the socialist system and its impact in the international arena challenging the very existence of colonies gave

moral and practical material impetus to the decolonisation process which in Africa gathered momentum as from the late fifties, blowing 'a wind of change' throughout the sixties to this day.

A general characteristic of class positions at this time was a united front of all class forces and strata of the colony against foreign domination, against colonialism in all its forms – politically, economically socially and otherwise.

The nature of the struggle was an anti-imperialist one, a progressive struggle enjoying popular sympathy of and support by progressive forces or natural allies all over the world – by communist and workers' parties, by workers, peasants and patriotic intellectuals in both socialist and capitalist countries. And, as long as the indigenous people of all walks of life were fighting for their supreme national right of independence from the colonial yoke and bondage, all other class interests were to a great extent temporarily submerged and subordinated to the supreme cause – national liberation. The unity and multi-class composition of almost all national liberation movements at this stage together with the content of their programmes, the direction and goals of their struggles reflected this basic truth.

The seizure of political power by the indigenous people through their national liberation movements, whether 'peacefully' or through armed struggle, marked a turning point, and opened a new chapter in the struggles of these people. It ushered in a period of conscious and practical Africanisation – the transfer of political, economic power and the control and guidance of the whole social life into the hands of nationals. This was often a long and painful process of trying to do away with foreign domination and exploitation in all fields. Through nationalisation of foreign-owned industries, foreign trade, banks and insurance companies, many African countries today are trying to put an end to income drain and losses in order to master and utilise their wealth for their national development. It is a process which requires a relatively rapid implementation of a national programme of training more and more national cadres to take over from colonial expatriates who are in all respects, be it economically, ideologically or otherwise an excessive burden on these very poor nations.

In the centres of learning, ideology or culture, therefore, Africanisation means not only putting nationals in the place of expatriates but the introduction of a new progressive staff and syllabi reflecting the content of the independence struggle –

anti-colonial, anti-imperialist in all respects. In short, in place of the colonialists and their agents the goal of Africanisation is to put African nationals to implement progressive and anti-imperialist programmes. But, it must be noted that a greater or smaller number of these nationals responsible for running the new state were often groomed just before independence by the colonial power for the specific purpose of implementing its interests ('when I am gone') – a potential danger to the goals of the national liberation revolution.

After independence the major task becomes the economic one – to feed, clothe, shelter and develop the nation. In the solution of this new and complex task other new problems emerge. Different class alliances and interests appear, together with the ugly head of neo-colonialism or foreign capital domination. The monolithic struggle for national independence gives way to the pursuit of different class interests and objectives hitherto insignificant or not predominant. The various class forces take their unconcealed positions from the highest to the lowest level – from state content and composition to the national bourgeoisie level, from the national bourgeoisie to the worker, from the kulaks and the merchant class to the poorest peasants and petty commodity producers.

Since all class struggles are in the final analysis struggles for the seizure of political power by one class as opposed to the other(s) and since the custodian of that class political power is the state it is of interest to look at the role, composition and goals of the African state at this period.

In many African countries today the content and goal of the African state which came into being after political independence have drastically changed. At first, the state had a mass character representing the interests of all classes and strata – the oppressed and struggling nation against colonial rule. Such a state gave an appearance of common interests between its governing institutions and the working people.

However, it soon became clear that the nation was composed of classes with different ultimate and permanent interests, and the class essence of the state became apparent. Under the cloak of being the state of the whole nation, present independent states in Africa support the interests of this or that class. They are *partisan states.* Nor is this peculiar to Africa alone. All states are class states and all nations are composed of classes who have either antagonistic or non-antagonistic contradictions.

The composition of the various organs of state – the parliament, the armed forces, police or militia, the educational and ideological institutions, the judiciary and administration – all these reflect the class structure of the nation. Depending on which class rules the state, the institutions of the state are either pro-capitalist or pro-working class and peasantry, pro-socialist. In almost all African states today, one finds a continuation and strengthening of the institutions of the past, the survival of capitalism dressed in a different gown which goes under the description of Africanness.

This is, of course, a loaded issue. There are those who look only at the form, the appearance of things, and not their essence, their content. The debate to decide who of Africa is African and who is not is packed with emotion, but conceals the fact that the African nation is itself divided into classes with divergent interests. The fact that an African capitalist is dressed in African clothing does not mean that he is a patriot of the whole nation and not just of his class.

Economically, in almost all African states today, a national bourgeoisie or an indigenous capitalist class has emerged and is getting stronger though still often an appendage of foreign capital. Secondly, we notice an alliance between formidable economic and political forces. On the economic side these forces are the national bourgeoisie or the capitalist class together with foreign monopolies and on the other side the new state representing the political power and carrying out the interests of the former. The common interest of the alliance is profit. The method used to reach this common goal or interest is Africanisation of the national economy – the establishment of African private enterprises or managerial 'ownership' of formerly purely foreign enterprises in the country and putting them into the hands of the rising indigenous national bourgeoisie supported by the state and foreign capital. This Africanisation process which during the time of fighting for political independence was progressive, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist has now become reactionary in that it becomes a base for propping up capitalist tendencies in general in the country instead of leading the nation forward to socialism. It is neo-colonial.

Once the different class interests inevitably emerge within the nation there also develops a dialectical change, an exposition of the actual class content and role of the state which is supposed to represent the interests of a classless 'nation' including both

the working people and the exploiters. The new state in many African countries today has become the expression of the stronger economic forces – the rising national capitalist class backed by foreign capital whose priority interest is profit first and national development only after that, or as a means of the former.

The question arises now as to how such a state can regulate or control private economic property (which it does not own) and effectively carry out national industrialisation and development according to any plan which is concerned in the interests of all the people. The new state finds itself faced with the task of having to side with either the revolutionary interests of the working people, or the emerging interests of profit for the national capitalists and foreign capital. For a time the state may become a mere go-between the now divergent class interests. Eventually the ability of the state to regulate or control the national economy comes to depend, firstly, on the real content of state power, i.e., which class within the state predominates. Secondly, it depends on the effectiveness of the state political and administrative apparatus; lastly, on the economic role of a progressive state sector.

Let us look very briefly, as an example, at the Africanisation process in East Africa. In Kenya, for instance, we have the deliberate establishment and encouragement of African exploiting classes under the garb of 'African socialism' backed by foreign capital, mainly British. And KANU, the National Liberation Movement, is no longer a liberation movement working in the interests of workers, peasants and patriotic intellectuals. It has to all intents and purposes disappeared or virtually given in to the capitalists (national and international) because of the rabid pro-capitalist, nepotist and bureaucratic leadership. The same thing has happened in Uganda except that the appearance here is military. In Tanzania TANU is also experiencing the same problems. The *Arusha Declaration*, the exit of the Kambonas, the cold-blooded murder of TANU representatives like Dr. Klerru by kulaks and the very *TANU Guidelines* directly or indirectly admit and reflect the presence, within the Africanisation process, of antagonistic class interests and the seething class struggles which make a united rapid progress towards the declared goal of socialism difficult if not impossible.

Africanisation therefore has two sides – a progressive and reactionary side. As long as it is anti-imperialist and therefore

for national independence, it is a progressive process. But once this process stops and it becomes capitalist or turns pro-imperialist in any form, Africanisation becomes reactionary and has to be stopped and its course changed if the revolution is to proceed. To continue from its progressive roots along a revolutionary route it has to put political power in the hands of the poor peasants and proletariat. The goal of decolonisation can be achieved only through a socialist revolution.

Present and past practical experiences of what capitalism means to the toiling masses in its more than three centuries of domination and the revolutionary changes brought about by the hardly sixty years old socialism have lifted the heads and hopes of millions of labourers the world over for a brighter future, towards socialism the higher stage of which will be communism. Africa is no exception to the rule and each African state is conscious of these trends as it is tossed backward (to capitalism) or forward (to socialism). Concurrently, all kinds of old and new exploiters hide and protect themselves under such slogans as "we are all workers" (as if hawk and dove could share comradeship or equality) when in actual fact they are the expropriators of the surplus value created by the real workers. These are enemies of the people, of the workers. These enemies of the people, the village kulaks, the town 'unknown', the owners of many hotels, restaurants, and bars and the like have more than one source of income.

The new African state dominated by its nascent national bourgeoisie, economically and ideologically strongly backed and propelled by its former colonial masters or their kith and kin (neo-colonialism), knowingly echoes the pro-imperialist tune of anti-communism, though here and there, for the sake of effect, it proclaims some form or brand of the most urgent and popular need – socialism, at least theoretically. This is perhaps one of the greatest tragedies of the African revolution of the 20th century: that many states declare that they are struggling for socialism but are at the same time anti-communist in theory and practice, as though there were a Chinese Wall between the two. Capitalism and monopoly capitalism cannot be separated from imperialism.

Today Africa is witnessing the sad spectacle of the Vorsters and Smiths, agents of international imperialism and fascism in Africa and therefore arch enemies of the African states, Africanisation and the African Revolution, strengthening themselves each day

by recruiting and winning over to their side unnatural allies of independent African States. The basis of 'dialogue' and 'detente' is anti-communism, in whose name imperialism and neo-colonialism are being allowed to return to the continent. The African revolution is in grave danger. And hundreds of the best sons of Africa have already laid down their lives as victims of this anti-communist campaign.

Of course the African scene is not as simple as it seems. The notorious unholy alliance of Vorster with free Africa is also based on the treacherous greed for South African commodity and money capital to 'solve' the economic ills of these countries. The womb of that capital is nothing else but the slave and fascist labour exploitation of the African working class of South Africa and indeed of neighbouring free African states themselves. This betrayal, this unprincipled co-operation also shows Africa's fear of South Africa's military strength. Some of our heads of state have already forgotten the heroic and victorious wars of the Vietnamese people against the combined imperialist brass.

But we now know from practical experience that there is a common factor in all socialist countries. They are not practising isolated and different brands of socialism. The common factor in all these countries is that the workers, in alliance with the peasants, and guided by a Marxist Leninist Party whose ideology is scientific socialism, have seized political power from the exploiting classes, formed their own new state apparatus militarily and ideologically after destroying the old one, have socialised all major means of production all over the country and are thus enabled to carry out a planned, fast developing socialist transformation of the whole national economy for the satisfaction of all the material and cultural needs of the toiling masses (not for profit maximation). The socialist countries are in complete solidarity with all other workers, peasants, patriotic intellectuals, with anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist and national liberation movements all over the world. The working people of the socialist countries know no unemployment, have no fear of whether they will eat tomorrow. Nor do they live on the sweat and blood of other nations. Instead they let other nations, including many of our own, share in the fruits of their own co-operative labour.

Secondly, we also now know that among the socialist countries there is not a single anti-communist one. Invariably, in fact, *all of them are run along communist party lines.*

If we agree and accept these to be the fundamental features of any socialist state, then Africanisation as it is today means only one step towards socialism. It means the African revolution is unfinished.

Our analysis of the stage reached by the African revolution should not lead us from one extreme of ultra-revolutionarism to another, not cast us down to despair. This is no time for dejection or surrender, which plays into the hands of our enemy and provides fertile ground for him to recruit his allies. If we have described what is wrong with African society it is because we want to change it.

Those who know or claim to know the truth have a solemn duty to society and especially to the majority who are working people. They must help to organise and train the most militant fighters for the continuation of the struggle *after* independence. The fight for socialism in all fields must be intensified. Many have given their lives in the freedom struggle. It is not enough to remember them. They must be avenged by the victory of socialism all over the world.

Bantustan Myths and Realities

by J. Villiers

MYTH No. 1: "Consolidation – that's the name of the game!"

Consolidation is a big word. It gets used a great deal when the Bantustans are being talked about. When the Bantustan chiefs had their first meeting with Vorster in March 1974, consolidation took up nearly half the time of the discussion. The meaning of consolidation in this context is simple: it is the government's plan – 'finalised' last year after several trial runs and unveiled in parliament in March 1975 – to reduce the 113 scattered fragments of land which presently make up the so-called 'homelands' to 36 fragments

This process entails the buying up of 'white' land, the selling of some reserve land, the eradication of 'black spots', and the shifting of tens of thousands of African families to fit them in with this elaborate map-making game. And elaborate it really is:

KwaZulu, for example, only needs a further 56,000 hectares to acquire its full quota under the 1936 Native Land and Trust Act. But consolidation will entail buying over 500,000 hectares of 'white' land and taking away nearly 450,000 hectares in return – all of which could cost as much as R340 million but will still leave the state of KwaZulu in no less than 10 separate fragments of land!

Some features of this programme need to be noted:

(a) no time limit has been set within which it is supposed to be carried out;

(b) no definite budgetary allocation has been made to finance it;

(c) According to the official estimate, nearly half a million people are going to have to be 'resettled' in terms of this plan. But more realistic estimates by those more directly affected by it than the Bantu Administration bureaucrats indicate that the consolidation of the Tswana homeland alone is likely to involve the uprooting of ¼ million people, while the rearrangement of the KwaZulu jig-saw puzzle is going to be done at the cost of moving some 300,000 people.

As though to underline its utter disregard for all concerned, the government announced in October 1975 that no further land would be purchased under the consolidation programme in the immediate future, and that the R50 million allocated for this purpose in the current year was to be cut in half, to R25 million. Coming out of the blue, and only flimsily related to the government's post-devaluation economic measures designed ostensibly to stem inflation (but essentially to shift the burden of the country's economic difficulties on to the backs of the poor), this decision revealed the farcical nature of the whole scheme.

In short, the consolidation scheme is a monstrous imposition, cooked up by the tribalists of the B.A.D., foisted upon the African people without even the semblance of consultation, and trimmed at every point to meet every whim and complaint of the white farmers, and to cut out of the 'homelands' every economic or strategic asset that might possibly be useful to the economy or security of white South Africa. Everything about it stinks of the high-handed arrogance and inhumanity of the racists, their arbitrary rule, and their fanatical desire to re-tribalise the black people of South Africa.

True and obvious as these criticisms are, they barely scratch the surface of the underlying reality. For the main objection to the whole consolidation exercise is its irrelevance to the needs and aspirations of the African people. Even if the whole plan were carried out fully, swiftly, humanely, and in consultation with all those affected nothing basic would be changed by the result! From the point of view of the overwhelming majority of African families who depend for their livelihood on money earned in 'white' South Africa, that reality would remain the same, and the liberation of the African people would not be advanced by one inch by the consolidation of 113 fragments into 36, grouped into ten tribal states. Economic servitude for the foreseeable future would remain the fate of the African people – and political servitude too.

If consolidation is not going to create a single unified territory for the Bantustans (except for the 3 smallest ones) and if it has nothing to do with giving them some potential basis for economic viability, what is the real purpose of consolidation? The answer is contained in two words: to *divert*, and to *divide*. Consolidation is part of the government's political process of diverting black attention away from the main goal, that of winning political power in the country as a whole. Seen in this context, the whole debate about whether the granting of independence should wait until consolidation is effected (the present position of most of the Bantustan 'leaders') or whether it is better to take independence first and thereafter to negotiate boundaries and settle the land question, can be seen as a fraudulent distraction, devoid of any significance except the fact that it *is* a distraction.

Also diversionary, and much more difficult to combat in concrete situations, is the divisive effect of the consolidation process. It stimulates (deliberately, of course) rival claims for particular pieces of land, like the dispute between Lebowa and Gazankulu over who is going to get the Bushbuckridge area in the Eastern Transvaal. In this sort of dispute, which is becoming more frequent, there can be no winners, and the African people as a whole are the losers, in so far as their unity is impaired by such concocted differences, their minds are turned away from the liberation struggle as a whole, and the self-assumed role of the racist regime as the arbiter of their claims, and as the ultimate determinant of their destiny, is cleverly reinforced.

Consolidation, together with a process innocently described as 'planning', also provides a pretext for the racists to dispossess the people in the countryside on an unprecedented scale. This is probably the most destructive aspect of the Bantustan policy, and with the speeding up of its implementation dangerous consequences are appearing. The uprooting of whole communities is enabling the authorities to rob the people of what little they have been able to build up over the years. If farming was difficult in the areas previously occupied, it is usually impossible in the areas into which people are now being dumped (which is why these areas are, before resettlement, so barren of people and of any of the means of development). White farmers move into the vacated areas, taking advantage of any improvements the former occupants have managed to make, while the latter struggle to survive, without compensation. 'Planned' areas suffer similarly: to fulfil its avowed intention of reducing the number of African farmers in the reserves (and to increase the pool of cheap labour available for the factories and the mines, which have had considerable success in enlarging their recruitment of South African, as opposed to 'foreign' black labour), the government has been forcing rural communities to move together into larger centres, and this unpopular procedure is often accompanied by the equally unpopular compulsory culling of cattle and fencing of pastures. At every opportunity the Bantu Investment Corporation (or its Xhosa counterpart in the Transkei and Ciskei) barges in with its superior resources and elbows out the local farmers and traders – usually to the benefit of white entrepreneurs. Indeed, according to an official spokesman for the BIC, of the R77 million it has invested since it was formed in 1959, R43 million has been in white-owned enterprises, and a further R20 million in enterprises owned by the BIC itself!

Landlessness is now the typical condition of the great majority of the inhabitants of the reserves. And every adjustment that is made in land allocations, either directly by Pretoria or on its behalf by some Bantustan government, gives the authorities scope for rewarding the loyalists, the servile and the corrupt, and for penalising critics and rebels. It is in this aspect of consolidation, ie. in the stimulating of tensions and hostilities *within* particular ethnic groups, that even more danger lies than in the inter-tribal rivalry which we have mentioned earlier and which is usually displayed above the level of the masses of the

people, in the relations between the puppet politicians who now purport to rule the 'homelands'. The severe and prolonged outbursts of so-called faction fighting in several parts of the Transkei in recent years, not to mention parts of KwaZulu (especially Msinga district) and also of Sekhukuneland district in Lebowa, cannot be understood except against this background of a desperate struggle for survival, and bitter conflict between radical and conservative forces, indeed, between the mass of the people and the forces of repression, which is only sometimes expressed through traditional rituals of contest.

Because they are so directly involved in these conflicts, and seek to stamp out the voices of protest and dissent, the Bantustan regimes are already – even before independence – openly dictatorial in attitude and behaviour. The Transkei has a head start when it comes to repression, with its much-used powers of indefinite detention without trial under Proclamation 400 (still in force 15 years after the emergency for which it was introduced in 1960!) But all the Bantustans now have potential powers akin to the Republican government's powers under the Suppression of Communism Act. The old banishment clauses of the 1927 Native Administration Act (much used in the reserves in the 1950's against militant opponents of the Bantu Authorities' policy) which had been little used in recent years, are now being invoked once again. The actions of the Ciskei's chief minister Sebe in getting Pretoria to banish Mr Louis Mtshizana, an attorney, from Mdantsane (near East London) to Herschel are a sign of things to come, as also has been Lucas Mangope's ruthless hounding of his critics within his own cabinet (no radicals they!) It is always the fate of puppets in such colonial-type situations to out-do their masters in brutal and ferocious repression – but that never saves them from being thrown on to the rubbish heap of history. The history of the US-dominated stooge dictators in South Vietnam is a vivid example of this reality.

MYTH No. 2: "Independence is around the corner."

In October 1976 the Transkei will get independence. This development should not take us by surprise, new though it is.

For the first ten-twelve years in which it was in power the Nationalist Party had no intention of granting independence to the 'Bantu Authorities' which it imposed on the people against widespread opposition. It was only in the sixties that Dr. Verwoerd began to envisage some ultimate formal constitutional separation of the Bantustans from 'white' South Africa. (We cannot avoid using this term; but of course South Africa is not 'white' at all – in fact there is no part of it where the majority of the population is not black). The main reason for this change was South Africa's growing isolation.

But for several years the racists only foresaw independence as a remote possibility. In 1969 Mr. M.C. Botha, the Bantu Affairs Minister, predicted that the Bantustans would get their independence around the turn of the century. But the liberation struggle hotted up once again in the 1970s, and so did the international campaign to isolate apartheid. As a direct consequence the whole policy was rushed into operation. New and hitherto unheard of things were born overnight – Lebowa, Bophuthatswana, Basotho Qwaqwa, Machangana (now Gazankulu). (We cannot call them states because a state implies a definite territory, and no matter how you juggle with words one cannot turn a handful of scattered reserves and farms into a 'state'.)

When the Nationalist Party chose to go into a general election a year early in April 1974 it was still on a platform of independence in five years' time for the Bantustans. Yet here we are today facing a situation in which the Transkei is only a few months from independence, and already has its 'ambassadors' posted to the capitals of the Western world where their function is not so much to represent 'their country' (there is very little to represent!) as to augment the chorus of Pretoria's propagandists white-washing the whole apartheid policy and clamouring for more foreign capital to keep it going.

There can be no doubt that independence, conceived within the framework of the Bantustan policy, is around the corner. But independence is not just the running up of a flag, the beating of a drum, the installation in office of a few hand-picked and well-groomed allies of the colonial regime, and the posting of ambassadors abroad. Independence in the colonial context is inseparable from the general idea of the *liberation* of the former colonial peoples. Properly so-called and understood, independence is a mighty step forward for a people labouring under colonial tyranny, and indeed it is the first stage towards ending

the exploitation of man by man and of realising the full economic and cultural potential of the entire society. Independence, even when stage-managed by the old colonial power to its best advantage (and we all know this has happened in parts of Africa), is unquestionably progress.

But Vorster's 'independence' is reaction. It is a blow against the freedom and unity of the African people and of the entire South African nation. It is a sordid perversion of the democratic essence which is the real significance of independence in the colonial context. Unlike the real thing, which was always sought after by the subjects of alien domination, Vorster's 'independence' has never been sought by any section of the oppressed in our country; on the contrary the whole policy of which it is but a logical extension has always been rejected by the African people and all democratic forces in South Africa. Nobody outside the Nationalist Party and government has asked for this pseudo-independence.

This is the first crucial difference between Bantustan-style independence and a genuine decolonisation. The latter has always been the outcome of just and legitimate demands of the people, an achievement of the peoples against imperialism, a weakening of colonialism, however cleverly the retreating colonial power arranged its withdrawal in order to establish neo-colonial relations with the new state. The second main difference between the real article and its apartheid substitute is that in the colonial context independence was always, is always for a people as a whole, for a nation-in-the-making, with a common territory which could ultimately (when imperialism's economic chains are also smashed) be the basis for an independent economy. In South Africa we already have a nation, one people united by their economic interdependence, but divided by the racist policies of the apartheid regime. Bantustan-independence seeks to further divide the people – along tribal lines. Using tribalism as the key criterion in a stage of South Africa's socio-economic development where the tribe no longer has any significance as a social organisation for production, distribution or exchange, the racists can find no meaningful territorial basis for the whole fraudulent exercise. Hence the fact that apartheid-type decolonisation entails the fragmentation of an existing territory and the splitting up of an existing people.

When the British were withdrawing from India they split the country into two separate countries, India and Pakistan, of which the latter was split into two territories, separated from each other by hundreds of miles. It was a reactionary and divisive scheme which laid the basis for continual conflict between the new states and between the two parts of Pakistan. Even so, it was a completely different operation from that which Vorster is launched upon. Decolonisation everywhere else has been based upon the geographical separation and territorial distinctness of the colonial power and the new state. But who can deny that geographically and territorially the two parts of the Transkei, or the ten parts of the proposed KwaZulu, or the six parts of the proposed Bophuthatswana are part and parcel of the country of South Africa? Passing a law to create a boundary which has never before existed cannot change the historically determined realities. This is the fundamental reason why Bantustan-independence is not and can never be any sort of independence at all.

Other factors are secondary, but not unimportant when seen in this basic perspective. All the Bantustans depend now, and will depend for as long as they survive, on the South African government for their very existence. They have been conceived and created by the racist state, and will never be able to exist independently of it. Three-quarters, if not more, of the revenue of the Bantustan governments is provided by Pretoria, and this is something which cannot be changed, given the economic function of the Bantustans as reservoirs of cheap migrant labour for the mines and industry, the farms and homes of 'white' South Africa. All the top civil service (ie. administrative) posts in all the Bantustans are occupied by white civil servants seconded from the South African government. Nothing can be done to which they have not agreed, or which they do not know about in advance. They will continue to serve Pretoria, independence or no independence. Now both these features (dependance of government on funds and personnel from the old colonial power) have been characteristic of many a neo-colonial regime in Africa and elsewhere, and are not peculiar in kind (only in degree) to the Bantustans. But given the fundamental reality, of the Bantustans being part of South Africa territorially, historically, economically, politically, these features serve to underline the fact that no meaningful independence is possible or is intended for these fragmented 'states'.

It has to be stressed that all these are objective flaws in the

Bantustan policy; that is to say they are independent of the wish or will of the individuals and groups actually involved. These realities are the product of a long period of history, and nobody can by sheer effort – or wishful thinking – transcend them. So the idea of the Bantustans as a stepping stone to the freedom of the whole of South Africa is at best an unrealistic pipe-dream, at worst a cunning deception fostered by sell-outs. Some people may delude themselves that one or two Bantustan chiefs are playing a complex double role, secretly going along with Pretoria in order to win time, space and a platform with which to fight back against white supremacy. The weakness of this theory is that it depends for its success entirely on the subjective factor – on the wishes, aims etc. of a few individuals in key positions. It disregards the nature of the system which has put those individuals into key positions and whose characteristics are beyond the power of any small group to alter. If tomorrow Buthelezi were to fall down a donga and kill himself, and Phatudi choked to death on a bit of tough meat, would the nature of the KwaZulu or the Lebowa Bantustan be any different from what it is today?

The Bantustan 'leaders' are widely and rightly regarded as puppets. But the term puppet is perhaps a bit too passive. We can more vividly compare them to a man's dogs kept on a leash. Such a creature can move around, bark and threaten, bite and hurt, but ultimately, whatever delusions of grandeur it may develop, it is a subordinate creature with no prospect of any autonomous existence no freedom and no dignity. More important, the Bantustan theory leaves out of account the role of the masses in the shaping of their own destiny. It is characteristic and inevitable that the person who figures most prominently in Buthelezi's numerous speeches and articles is Buthelezi himself – justifying his role, apologising, protesting. The people hardly figure, except as passive victims who have to be led, shown what to do by their gifted and superior leader. It cannot be said too often that there is no force on earth except the oppressed people of South Africa, led not by an individual but by their liberation movement spearheaded by the African National Congress, that can defeat the racist enemy and smash up the whole system of white domination. Any self-styled leader who promotes himself and fails to encourage in the masses the sense of their own power and confidence in their ability to win their freedom betrays the cause of freedom.

MYTH No. 3: "We have no choice – the Bantustans are now a reality."

Against the background of the realities already set out, the third myth can be quickly disposed of. Anybody who says that he has no choice, that he has been forced to accept the Bantustans, is either a coward or a villain. The people carry passes, but they do not accept them. They live in the so-called 'homelands', but they do not accept them. They are compelled to use the tribal courts in their disputes, and to deal with the tribal authorities when it comes to licences and taxes, but they do not accept the system or the policy.

The Bantustan 'leaders' often give voice to a sense of despair, or (which amounts to much the same thing) proclaim their helplessness in the face of the government's power and ruthlessness. (Of course this claim contradicts the image which they try to create of being real leaders, a force for change, the last great hope of the African people). But they are right only in so far as once they, or anybody else, accepts the policy of separate development, they *are* helpless, because they are acquiescing in their subordination. But in reality no slave is forced to *accept* his slavery. Rejecting it, he has to find the ways and means of breaking out of the system. And this is where strategy and tactics come in. Again, it is not accidental, but inherent in their very role, that on all the basic strategies of the liberation struggle the Bantustan stooges are on the side of the oppressors. They reject the need to prepare for and mount armed struggle, to isolate South Africa internationally and to stop the flow of foreign capital into the country. It is not just that certain 'leaders' happen to disagree with these policies. They all, without exception, and inevitably *must* by reason of their position reject the strategies of liberation which our people's long and difficult struggle has shown are the only way forward.

The Transkei's independence, it can confidently be predicted, will be an abortion. It may happen, all right, but no life, no progress can result from it. It can only serve to inspire all patriots and democrats to unite their ranks and to strive ever harder, whatever the sacrifice, for the real goal of national liberation for the whole of South Africa and the victory of the people's democratic revolution.

AFRICAN UNIONS AT THE CROSSROADS

by David Davis

"The Secret of the Prime Minister's success in detente is his unorthodox approach. What he has achieved was achieved outside the framework of the United Nations. Similarly, the South African Labour movement can make headway on the international front outside the framework of the International Labour Organisation."
Mr Arthur Grobbelaar, General Secretary TUCSA.[1]

The emergence over the past few years of a number of African trade unions and worker-education bodies, and the increasing frequency with which leaders of certain of these organisations are being accepted and funded by trade unions abroad, raises new questions of tactics for anti-apartheid activists in the labour movement. In an earlier article[2] the relationship between the

African unions and other domestic and international forces was examined. This article is an attempt to provide an insight on the composition of the African trade union scene itself.

At the last count there were 21 African trade unions in existence. Centred in either the Transvaal or in Natal, these ranged from the 23,000 member National Union of Clothing Workers, led by Lucy Mvubelo, to the 70-odd-member Tobacco Workers' Union of African Women. Except for four unions of which little is known, the unions may, in terms of origin, working relationships or affiliation, be divided into three groups: the Urban Training Project (UTP) group; the Trade Union Advisory & Co-Ordinating Council (TUACC) group; and the TUCSA group. While this classification should not be taken too rigidly, it does provide us with a framework for interpreting broad directions of policy, particularly in the case of the TUACC unions, where leadership and policy decisions are more co-ordinated and action more concerted than is the case with the other two groups. Dividing the unions on this basis we get the following breakdown:[3]

TUACC Group	*Membership*
1. National Union of Textile Workers	5000
2. Metal and Allied Workers' Union	3900
3. Union of Clothing & Allied Workers	1000
4. Chemical Workers' Industrial Union	600
5. Furniture & Timber Workers' Union	300
6. Transport & General Workers' Union	70
	10870

UTP Group	
1. Engineering & Allied Workers' Union	3000
2. Black Allied Workers' Union	2700
3. Transport & Allied Workers' Union	700
4. African Chemical Workers' Union	600
5. Sweet, Food & Allied Workers' Union	400
6. Laundry & Dry Cleaning Workers' Association	200
7. Building, Construction & Allied Workers' Union	300
	7900

TUCSA Group	
1. National Union of Clothing Workers	18500
2. African Textile Workers' Union	1000
3. United Automobile, Rubber & Allied Workers' Union	600
4. S.A. Bank Employees' Union	150
	20250
Others	
1. African Transport Workers' Union	600
2. African Tobacco Workers' Union	300
3. Paper & Allied Workers' Union	100
4. Tobacco Workers' Union of African Women	70
	1070

The Trade Union Advisory and Co-ordinating Council was set up in late 1973 to coordinate the activities of the unregistered unions then being formed in Natal, and to liaise with Bantustan authorities in matters concerning African labour. Representation on the Council is open to Bantustan officials, although none have so far formally accepted the invitation. TUACC tends to speak for the Natal unions on all issues requiring a common approach.

The unions themselves are all of fairly recent origin. The mass strike wave which shook Natal in January and February 1973 concentrated into a determined effort by advanced sections of the African proletariat to sustain the strength of unity which had been so clearly demonstrated earlier in the strikes. The General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund (GFWBF), a friendly society providing funeral benefits to African workers, already had a sizeable membership when the strikes burst out. As well as providing funeral benefits, the Fund dealt with industrial complaints and had attracted mass support in the textile and metal factories in the area. A complement to the activities of the GFWBF was provided by radical white students in the Wages Commission, whose newspaper *Isisebenzi* carried news on Wage Board meetings, industrial legislation and strike activity.

The decision to form the first union came from GFWBF members in metal factories in Pietermaritzburg. The high level

of consciousness of the workers was the result of previous SACTU activity, for "there was a Union covering these workers in the late 50s and early 60s, but which disintegrated as a result of the banning of its leaders".[4] In June, workers in Durban formed the second branch of the Metal & Allied Workers' Union; August saw the formation of the National Union of Textile Workers and the Union of Clothing and Allied Workers, while the rest followed later in the year. The General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund also grew apace: by July 1974 its membership stood at 18,000.[5]

Despite their surge in growth (in September 1975 they claimed to represent 38,000 workers)[6] the TUACC unions were soon to be bedevilled by the central problem for a black union in the apartheid state: sterile economism doomed to failure, or militant working class action combining political and economic forms of struggle. SACTU stated this option at its foundation back in 1956; The organising of the mass of the workers for higher wages, better conditions of life and labour is inextricably bound up with a determined struggle for political rights and liberation from all oppressive laws and practices. It follows that a mere struggle for the economic rights of the workers without participation in the general struggle for political emancipation would condemn the trade union movement to uselessness and to a betrayal of the interests of the workers."[7]

The black working class in South Africa, as the Communist Party has said, are doubly oppressed – as a race and as workers. The disabilities of the African worker are not confined to the factory or workshop. They affect the whole of his life – because he is a subject, not a citizen. As comrade R.E. Braverman stated in a previous article: "A distinctive feature of the South African liberation movement is the fact that the South African economy is based on African labour under slave conditions: the national liberation mass movement is overwhelmingly a movement of enslaved wage workers, plus the peasant workers, intellectuals, students and scholars. Hence the importance of the organisation and leadership of the African working class. This is the crucial matter. What leadership, what political consciousness we inculcate now will decide the future. We must arm the African working class with revolutionary *working class* theory, raising its political and class consciousness

to carry out the historical task of the working class of leading the revolution in alliance with other liberatory forces in our country."[8]

Organisational inexperience and lack of political maturity in the leadership of the TUACC unions resulted in their backing down before this challenge. The unions attempted to pursue a middle road between the two options – and received the worst of both worlds in return. Pursuing a militant (but totally 'economistic') approach, they attracted the hostility of the security police, BOSS, the Department of Labour, and the employers themselves. Unable to negotiate with management and so deliver the goods to their members (and unwilling to explain to the workers why the goods could not be delivered within present economic limits of struggle), the unions found themselves forced into the position of playing a subsidiary role to the spontaneous action of the members themselves. At factory after factory it was the workers themselves who took the decision to strike, and only contacted the union when the deed was already done. Failure on the part of the unions to secure results for their forms of action resulted in the membership becoming apathetic and disillusioned with the need for a union. Although paper membership has continued to rise, a sizeable gap remains between this and the number of paid-up members. Despite two and a half years of operation, the unions have so far found only one firm -- Smith & Nephew – prepared to negotiate with them. Unable to negotiate wage increases, the unions functions have devolved into the processing of industrial complaints alone – the dead end of the economistic road.

TUCSA must as usual share the blame for the failure of the African unions to score in their economic demands. While agreeing to the affiliation of African unions, the registered unions in TUCSA have continued to jealously guard their shop floor privileges. The African unions are not interested in formal affiliation to TUCSA, but in practical cooperation with registered unions on the shop floor. "They want assistance with organising African workers, getting access to factories, and consultations over Industrial Council Agreements."[9] This TUCSA have steadfastly refused to do, claiming that it has no power to direct its affiliates. When the TUACC unions issued a statement at the

1974 TUCSA Conference calling on TUCSA to convene a special conference to resolve the difference between African and registered unions in the same industries and called on them not to enter into any Industrial Council Agreement without the prior consent of the African unions, TUCSA dismissed the proposal without consideration.[10].

At Metal Box in Durban, where, despite having membership amongst the African workers, the Metal and Allied Workers' Union had been denied recognition by management, the TUCSA-affiliated SA Boilermakers' Union attempted to pull off a coup by obtaining from management sole bargaining rights for the African workers. When the combined agitation of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union and the Coloured and Indian SA Tin Workers' Union forced management to put the issue to the ballot, the workers gave the Boilermakers intrigue the crushing defeat it deserved. Out of 1060 votes cast, all but 31 voted against the Boilermakers' scheme.[11]

If the TUACC unions must be judged to have failed so far in the narrowness of their actions, then the Institute for Industrial Education was surely doomed from the start. The institute, a Durban based worker-education correspondence college closely associated with the Natal unions, typifies particularly acutely the narrowness of approach to the real issues seeking solutions. It was established in May 1973 under the Chancellorship of Bantustan chief Gatsha Buthelezi and has a structure heavily loaded with academics. Apart from publishing material aimed at workers (on industrial legislation, techniques of negotiation, basic economics etc), the IIE also publishes the SA Labour Bulletin. A heavily academic journal, the Bulletin nevertheless feels compelled to reassure the regime by sinking to anti-Soviet smears and fashionable references to 'Soviet imperialism'.[12]

The IIE has recently chosen to throw itself on the international stage as the spokesman for the African proletariat. In November 1974 the Institute entered into an associate arrangement with the British Ruskin College, against the wishes of the Ruskin students and of SACTU. Despite public protests since then at this link, the Institute has chosen to brave the storm and do nothing to break the connection. In November Fozia Fisher, a member of the editorial board of the SA Labour

Bulletin, visited Europe on a publicity and fund-raising tour for the Institute. As well as meeting Church and academic groups, her tour included meetings with West German, Dutch and Danish unions, with the British TUC, the ICFTU and the ILO. As a result of her visit, the TUC agreed to cover the cost of training 'shop steward trainers', and to pay the salary of an information and research officer and the rent for a new office. The cost came to R18,000.[13]

"This will be straightforward trade union training – no frills and no politics" was how the TUC spokesman described the donation.[14] Other grants received were R200 from the ICFTU and donations from War on Want as well as Dutch churches.

If the TUACC unions and the IIE have shown a reluctance to face the real issues, they have nevertheless played a far more militant role than their counterparts in the Transvaal. There the Urban Training Project has played an overtly conservative role from the beginning. Described by its head, Mr E. Tyacke, as "an educational institution and service organisation" its central message is to "keep politics out of the unions". On establishment in 1971, the UTP engaged itself in actively promoting the growth of government-type 'Works Committees', working within the Bantu Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act. It regarded the idea of unions as too radical a step right up to mid-1973, when opposition from workers forced it to modify its stance. Even then its training remained "at a relatively simple level and directed towards workshop representatives".[16] The *Financial Mail* commented: "In assisting workers to utilise the statutory committee system effectively, the training groups are helping to make Marais Viljoen's labour laws work."[17] The UTP has modified its stand on Works Committees, regarding them now as complementary to, rather than a substitute for, trade unions.[18] In practice, however, its activities continue to be centred around the factory committee.

When the British TUC visited South Africa in 1973 it described the UTP as "a modest and cautious organization, working within severely practical limits."[19] This testimony to impotence was apparently enough to warrent TUC support. In February 1975 it was announced that the UTP was to receive R20,800 from the TUC.[20]

The Urban Training Project appears to have been successful elsewhere on the international stage. Four of its assisted unions have international connections. The Transport and Allied Workers' Union formed in 1973 after a strike by bus drivers employed by PUTCO, is affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation.[21] The union's General Secretary, Mr John Hoffman, propagates the UTP line that "trade unions, to be successful must keep out of politics."[22] Another union, the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers' Union, formed in February 1974 is supported by the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations. The Laundry and Dry Cleaning Workers' Association and the African Chemical Workers' Union are associate members of the International Chemical Workers' Federation.[23]

An organisation connected with the UTP which has gained much attention largely as a result of its rhetorical activity, is the Black Allied Workers' Union (BAWU), an offshoot of the Black People's Convention.

In its short history, BAWU has throughout shown two faces. On the one hand it emphasises the truism that black trade union organisation must assert itself as an independent force in the context of a situation in which the official trade union movement is dominated and controlled by white workers who, at the moment, constitute one of the mainstays of reaction. On the other hand, BAWU's militant-sounding appeals to Black Consciousness are combined with a reformist approach to the role of black trade unions. Soon after its formation, BAWU declared in a statement that it intends to win the respect of the employers and the government by increasing black workers' productivity; and it attempted to set at rest government fears by stating that it would not wish to "hold the economy of the country to ransom by organising illegal strikes and making unreasonable demands for political reasons."[24] The same approach emerged from an appeal for financial help to a West German organisation made in 1973 by D. Koka, the then leader of BAWU, previously associated with the white Liberal Party. In the appeal, Koka stated that the Ford Motor Company was already helping his organisation with donations of transport, and went on to repeat the claim that his organisation "is still quite healthy – even from the government

point of view" which tolerates the organisation because " we do our own thing – and do not confront the government."[25]

Fearful of attacking the government, BAWU has found other targets for its rhetoric. The lack of coherent political theory in its leadership leads to it confusing white domination within TUCSA with white activity elsewhere in the labour movement. In Durban, where whites were working with African unions, BAWU last year issued pamphlets urging textile workers to purge the Textile Union of the whites working in it. These divisive attempts within the labour movement should be countered by all means possible and the petty bourgeois influences responsible for them brought into line or expelled, it said.

The largest African trade union by far is the 23,000 strong[26] National Union of Clothing Workers, led by Lucy Mvubelo, white supremacy's willing dupe within the black labour movement. As far back as 1959 Lucy Mvubelo and her co-collaborator Sarah Chitja were instrumental, with the ICFTU, in forming the Federation of Free African Trade Unions (FOFATUSA) with the aim of weakening SACTU and breaking the link between the political organisation of the people, the ANC, and the African trade union movement. The ensuing 16 years have not taught Lucy Mvubelo anything. In April 1975 she joined with Arthur Grobbelaar of TUCSA and Attie Niewoudt of the Confederation of Labour in promising support to the apartheid regime "in stopping Communist infiltration into the country's labour force."[27] Lucy Mvubelo is obviously trying to demonstrate her complete trustworthiness to white supremacy, and she goes to sickening lengths to do so. In November 1974 she addressed a memorandum to the Minister of Labour, detailing her union's "12-year-old history of responsible trade unions" and pleading for official recognition for the union. The memorandum boasted that the union had never been accused of instigating strikes. "If strikes occurred, they usually lasted up to the time when one of the union's officials arrived on the scene."[28]

Lucy Mvubelo has lent herself willingly to both official and unofficial attempts at "detente". In 1973 she attended both the ILO Conference and the annual conference of the AFL-CIO in

Miami where she managed to get altered a key resolution calling on the American labour movement to give full support to SACTU as "the only trade union movement that is recognised by the Black South Africans and the United Nations". The resolution ultimately passed by the AFL-CIO deleted all reference to SACTU and merely referred to support for trade unionists "inside and outside South Africa" who oppose apartheid.

At a conference of thirty African, Latin American and Asian countries organised by the African-American Labour Centre, held in Washington, she obtained recognition. She also urged 26 major US industrialists at a meeting in New York to continue investing in South Africa.[29] Last year she attended a labour seminar in Brazil. "We spent six days discussing trade union efforts to foster understanding and overcome hostility at home and abroad. It was detente in the fullest sense."[30] Her assistant Sarah Chitja was away in Tel-Aviv, Israel, attending a three-month course for Afro-Asian trade unionists.

The importance of stooges like Lucy Mvubelo is well recognised by the apartheid regime. In an article on the value of international contacts by trade unions[31] the Johannesburg *Star* put great strength on the 'major breakthrough' expected next March, when Lucy Mvubelo and three other trade unionists take part in the four-yearly meeting of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation in Dublin. That meeting is to be followed by an African regional conference designed to lead to the formation of an African regional committee of the federation. The apartheid regime is anxious to gain representation on the committee as a staging post for further adventures in detente and Lucy Mvubelo will be expected to play her part.

The African unions have come to the turning-point and a decision must be made – whether to advance, or to lose ground and fall back. The economic struggle of the workers against the employers is a trade union struggle for better terms in the sale of their labour power to the capitalists. But the methods by which the capitalist class is able to extract such vast quantities of surplus value from the African working class is *precisely through the mechanism and laws of the apartheid state.* In no way can a genuine working class organisation therefore attempt to isolate itself from the struggle for political rights

without betraying the interests of its members. In Lenin's words: "Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves .... the *only* choice is – either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course ..."[32] To retreat from the struggle for political rights is to fall into the trap set by the Arthur Grobbelaars of the labour movement – people who fulfil political functions with every word they utter.

The central need now is for the black unions to face this reality and to prepare themselves to meet it through united action within the black labour confederation. The attempts to woo African unions back into the ranks of TUCSA should be rejected, and the vacillations inside the African group by unions like the NUCW, should be neutralised and corrected. The Trade Union Advisory & Co-Ordinating Council unions have already decided against affiliating to TUCSA and are seeking instead to "build alliances or establish closer co-operation with other unregistered unions."[33] As TUACC chairman Alpheus Mthethwa asked of TUCSA last year: "How can we work together if registered unions discriminate against blacks?"[34]

The Transvaal unions – the Urban Training Project group and the NUCW – must grab the opportunities available and unite with the TUACC unions within a single black union federation. Only when this is done will the African labour movement be ready for the tasks that lie ahead, one of which is to consider how best to function under the overall umbrella of SACTU, which remains the only internationally recognised federation representing the South African working class of all races and capable of realising its economic and political objectives.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Star* 13/10/1975.
2. David Davis 'Trade Unions – Reformist or Revolutionary?' *African Communist* No. 62, Third Quarter 1975.
3. Unions and membership figures are taken from the *Financial Mail* 19/7/1974, except in the case of the Building, Construction and Allied Workers' Union founded early in 1975, for which see *Star* 18/3/1975.
4. *South African Labour Bulletin*, Institute for Industrial Education, Durban, Vol. 1 No. 3, p. 47.
5. *Financial Mail* 19/7/1974.
6. *Cape Times* 23/9/1975.
7. A. Hepple *South Africa: Workers Under Apartheid*, International Defence and Aid Fund, London, 1971, p. 7.
8. R.E. Braverman 'African Trade Unions and the Liberation Struggle', *African Communist* No. 60, First Quarter 1975.

9. *Financial Mail* 27/9/1974.
10. *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 1 No. 6, Sept-Oct 1974. Also *Financial Mail* 4/10/1974.
11. *Star* 8/9/1975.
12. See 'Slant-Eyed Men in the City of Fear', *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 2 No. 2. Also 'Two-Edged Red Herrings', *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 1 No. 10.
13. *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 1 No. 8, pp. 64 and 65.
14. *Rand Daily Mail* 6/12/1974.
15. *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 1 No. 8, pp. 64 and 65.
16. *Trade Unionism in South Africa*, Report of a Delegation from the TUC, p. 21.
17. *Financial Mail* 18/10/1974.
18. *Financial Mail* 18/10/1974. Also see *Sunday Times* 13/10/1974.
19. TUC Report p. 22.
20. *Cape Times* 5/2/1975.
21. International Defence and Aid Information Service, Jan-June 1974, Col. 668.
22. *Sunday Times* 24/2/1974.
23. International Defence and Aid Information Service, Jan-June 1974, Cols. 668 and 669.
24. *Rand Daily Mail* 9/12/1972.
25. 'South Africa – A Time of Challenge', *African Communist*, No. 56, First Quarter 1974, p. 43. Also see R.E. Braverman 'African Workers Advance' *African Communist*, No. 53, pp. 60 and 61.
26. *Star* 30/8/1975.
27. *Natal Mercury* 23/4/1975, cited in *S.A. Labour Bulletin* Vol. 1 No. 1.
28. *Star* 9/11/1974.
29. *Rand Daily Mail* 14/11/1973, cited in Braverman, *African Communist* No. 60 p. 56.
30. *Star* 13/10/1975.
31. Ibid.
32. V.I. Lenin *What Is To Be Done?* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 40.
33. *Star* 27/8/1975.
34. *Financial Mail* 27/9/1974.

BOOK REVIEWS

AN OPPOSITION CENSORED

Elaine Potter: *The Press as Opposition: The Political Role of South African Newspapers* (Chatto & Windus, £5.50).

After the Nationalist Government came to power in South Africa in 1948, it set about systematically suppressing all political opposition outside Parliament (by 1960 all the important left-wing and African nationalist organisations had been banned or forced underground) – and the opposition inside Parliament soon gave up any ideas about opposing. Elaine Potter's argument is that the vacant role of 'opposition' was in fact filled not by a political organisation or party, but by the Press: the white-owned, white-run, profit-oriented, largely mine-capitalised Press.

Which is absurd!

Her book's usefulness really lies not in this argument, but in the detailed factual material describing the situation of the

South African Press over the 20 years 1948-1968. South African newspapers are among the oldest in Africa, their history has been eventful, and the situation of the English-language Press today is certainly an intriguing one . . . . .

There are at present two Presses in South Africa, both white (the black and progressive Press was suppressed by the early sixties). On the one hand are the powerful, high-circulation English-language dailies and Sundays, nine of which are owned by the biggest Press group in Africa. Many of these papers have roots in the 19th century, and most of them see themselves as heirs to the liberal British 'free' Press tradition. This means of course that they are out to make a profit (Elaine Potter quotes several spokesmen reassuring her on this point). On the other hand are the Afrikaans-language newspapers, most of them no more than a generation old, all of them journals with a mission, to encourage Afrikaner nationalism and build Afrikaner culture. Even loyal Nationalists tend to take two newspapers, however: the second, one of the English papers, for news.

After the Nationalists came to power, they set about bringing the English Press into line, or at least curbing any excessive enthusiasm for news. The Government made certain kinds of reporting illegal – publishing one set of facts or another, or the statements of one category of persons or another. 'Security' information and anything to do with prisons, detentions, torture, become very hot indeed. But on the whole the Government contented itself with threats of censorship rather than direct censorship laws. A Press Commission took fourteen years to report, various warnings were issued on what would happen *unless* the newspapers decided to behave 'responsibly'.

Strangely enough, the English language Press thrived. It happily ate its cake and kept it, winning itself a reputation for fearless defence of press freedom while at the same time imposing exactly the self-censorship the government demanded. Some editors did push their luck – Laurence Gandar's exposure of prison conditions in the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1965 in defiance of the Prisons Act reverberated round the world, and caused real changes in the conditions of some political prisoners. But as Elaine Potter explicitly recognises, the 'Opposition' Press can only 'oppose' within the strict limits of Government toleration and its own self-censorship. Even its present – obviously desirable – efforts to identify with the problems of the black majority (protests against the migrant labour system or the

practice of torturing political prisoners, news on slum housing conditions and forced population removals) are not unconnected with the fact that it is now only among the black population that circulations can expand (50% of the readers of the *Cape Argus* in 1968, it seems, were black).

All of which analysis of course flatly contradicts the author's thesis that the press has taken over the role of Opposition. As for her prediction that it will become increasingly a spokesman for *black* Opposition as well as white, as its black readership increases – you'll only swallow that if your definition of 'opposition' is restricted to what the mining companies and the government will permit. And for most of us, a definition of opposition starts just about where that permission ends . . .

Which is not to deny that the survival of the English-language Press is an important political fact in South Africa. Blacks don't choose those newspapers for no reason – they read them because they are hungry for information, and news, and a picture not only of their own country but of the world outside, and the English papers are to some extent at least meeting the need. Though what sort of picture they get would be another study, it is certain that the information available to everyone would be a lot poorer without the variety and conflicting motivations of the present English-language Press.

AMERICAN FREEDOM FIGHTER

Angela Davis, an Autobiography (Hutchinson, £3.95).

Her trial on charges of murder, kidnapping and conspiracy made Angela Yvonne Davis world-famous. At the age of 26, this woman activist found herself at the centre of one of America's most significant political trials. All over the world, people followed the dramatic story of her two months in hiding, her arrest, the prolonged struggles to obtain for her elementary rights as a prisoner and for her release on bail. And we became involved in the trial itself and felt a deep personal joy when she was cleared of all charges.

We must have our folk-heroines and heroes (our 'folk-people', perhaps we should say?). And it is not a wish to idolise or set

apart these few from the nameless ones who struggle as hard for human rights. It is just that they become our symbols and spokespeople, which does not in fact reduce the efforts of the unknowns, but helps to elevate the struggles of all through the publicised experiences of a few.

The choice is not a haphazard one. People like Angela Davis possess qualities of leadership that propel them into the forefront. Those qualities emerge forcefully in this book, which begins with her weeks in hiding, goes back to describe her home background, education and development as a political activist, and finishes with the trial and the verdict. Angela Davis states in the preface that she did not wish to write an autobiography, which seemed presumptuous at her age; but that when she envisioned it as a *political* autobiography that emphasised 'the people, the events and the forces in my life that propelled me to my present commitment' then she decided to write it. She felt that concentration on her own personal history might detract from the movement which brought her case to the people in the first place.

She should have no doubts about the book, for her story of the black struggles in which she participated is a rivetting one. She is aware constantly not of herself as an individual but as part of a collective movement. This feeling of always acting in accord with others, this awareness that alone she, Angela Davis, is powerless, but that together with the people she can be powerful, is carried forward even in situations where she is physically isolated from contact with other people, as during her periods in jail, when she found ways to communicate with the other women in jail, and was constantly aware of their problems. When a massive demonstration was held outside the New York jail where she was first held, the chants of "Free Angela" filled her with excitement, but at the same time she was concerned that an overabundance of such chants might set her apart from the rest of the women in jail, "my sisters".

> "I shouted one by one the names of all the sisters on the floor participating in the demonstration. 'Free Vernell! Free Helen! Free Amy! Free Joann! . . .' I was hoarse for the next week."

She describes how she became a communist, and why she feels such strong commitment to the Communist Party.

From this book we not only come to know the intelligent, courageous and passionate freedom-fighter, but also the lives and

struggles of black American women and men, struggles which are essentially the same as ours – for human rights, for justice, for freedom – and with which we feel a powerful sense of solidarity.

B.H.

WHITE FEMALE FOOTNOTES

Cherry Michelman: *The Black Sash of South Africa, A Case Study in Liberalism* (O.U.P., £6.50).

Predominantly middle-aged, middle-class – and white to a woman – the Black Sash which, at the latest accounting, has 1200 members is a curious phenomenon. Founded in 1955, in response to the Senate Bill, a Nationalist measure to 'pack' the white Senate with its own supporters, it has over the succeeding twenty years played two roles. The first has been one of protest and propaganda; silent demonstrations, wearing the symbolic black, mourning sash, against legislation, and the production of material exposing the racist and cruel nature of such legislation. The second has been in the 'advice offices' where members of the Sash have given advice to Africans harried under such laws as the Pass Laws. In giving this advice, members of the Sash have become experts in the tortuous processes by which the apartheid machine expels those who cannot fulfil a labouring function for the white community to the deserts mythically entitled 'homelands'. In both these areas, hard and useful work has been done by the organisation, as this book acknowledges, perhaps a trifle fulsomely at times: "The Athlone Advice Office . . . is hardly an attractive or appealing environment for volunteer women who are highly privileged residents of Cape Town, which must be one of the most beautiful cities on earth."

Here the gulf opens: the gulf between the black citizens of South Africa who are experiencing apartheid, and these benevolent, distressed observers. A National President of the Sash notes that, when the Sash was founded, its "prominent" recruits "would not have joined any organisation which involved direct association with non-whites". And, as the author of this book acknowledges, the exclusively white composition of the body is the factor which has prevented its being subject to the overt persecution suffered by non-racial organisations.

A recent statement declares that "the Black Sash, while welcoming black consciousness is totally opposed to all forms of Nationalism." While we congratulate these women on the work they have done, it must be acknowledged that they stand far apart from the real struggle being waged in South Africa: that struggle for national liberation which must inevitably precede the creation of the just society which they declare to be their objective. The Black Sash's story deserves a footnote in the histories. Few, except specialists, are likely to be eager to read this 200-page treatment of their role.

D.W.

Also available from

Inkululeko Publications
39 Goodge Street
London W1.

50 Fighting Years: The South African Communist Party 1921-1971 by A. Lerumo. Price £1.25 (US $4.00)

The Road to South African Freedom: Programme of the SACP Price 25p. (50 cents)

Africa on the New Road by Pyotr Manchka. Price 15p. (25 cents)

International Meeting of Communist & Workers Parties Moscow 1969. Price £1.00 ($3.00)

THE NATIONAL QUESTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

[We think the following article, which was printed as a letter from a reader in the July, 1975, issue of *Mayibuye*, the monthly organ of the African National Congress of South Africa published in Lusaka, will be of interest to readers of *The African Communist.*–Ed.]

Dear Comrades,

re: 'The National Question In South Africa'

The attainment of independence by Mozambique, right at the doorsteps of fascist South Africa, is of great significance for the struggle for national independence of the overwhelming black majority in our country. We have to keep pace with events. This

becomes obvious when one considers that the events in Portugal and the repercussions on her former colonies have affected not only the course of development of events in the Southern tip of the African Continent, but also our strategies and theories. This emphasises the assertion that the fluid situation in Southern Africa needs swift and prompt reaction. Theory is as vital to our movement as the daily bread we eat. In fact, the role of theory is increasing in our movement.

It is in this spirit that I want to make some few remarks in connection with some ideas expressed in the popular series 'Our Struggle' in *Mayibuye*. In this context, I am not so much worried by the rather descriptive style and the fact that the articles tend to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. I am more concerned with the contents, especially the author's remarks concerning the 'national question' and the concept of 'self-determination'.

In the very first article of this series, its author expressed himself as follows:

> The Boers – who left no stone unturned to weld themselves into a nation . . . (Vol. 1, No. 2)

This idea is repeated in a slightly different context in the second article of the 'popular series'. Two questions immediately came to my mind: What makes the author think the Boers are a 'nation'? How many 'nations' do we have in South Africa?

Before I could even attempt to answer these questions, I had a rude shock when I read in No. 6 of *Mayibuye*:

> We do not ask for 'self-determination'. That slogan, however progressive it may sound, is counter-revolutionary in the specific historical and social conditions of South Africa.

The author then goes on to justify his stand on the grounds that South Africa is an "independent, self-governing state, and not a colony of a far-away imperialism".

It is very difficult for me to accept the ideas expressed in this article. The formation of the ANC in 1912 was an incident of historic significance. The Africans were united so as to continue on a higher level the struggles for *national liberation* which they waged since 1652. In 1910, colonialism in South Africa was reduced to an 'internal affair of an independent state', but this did not alter its essence. As far as the content of our struggle is concerned, nothing has changed. This is due to the fact that the situation of the black masses in our country today does not differ at all from their situation in, let us say, the 18th century.

That is why, to the Africans, such dates as 1910, 1931 and 1961 are absolutely meaningless.*

I agree with the author that 'our policy is the same as that of independent African states'. I will go further, and add that the Africanness of our revolution consists in the fact that our struggle, like the rest of the struggles on the continent, is for an *independent African state.* To me, the Vorster regime is far from being an 'independent African state': It is imperialistic in form and content, and is anything else but not 'African'. During this period of 'detente' *a la* Vorster or 'Lusaka Manifesto', it is important more than ever before that we clarify our stand on this question of the status of the South African fascist regime. This is also emphasised by the Declaration of the ANC adopted at Morogoro in March 1975, which states that the Pretoria regime is "a product of colonial conquest, whose independence, sovereignty and United Nations membership constitutes a violation of the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations". The document goes on to call on all OAU and UN member states to intensify their efforts towards its immediate expulsion from the United Nations.

The question of South Africa's 'independence' and 'sovereignty' is crucial in the present confrontation between the forces of progress and reaction in Africa, because the exponents of 'detente' *a la* Vorster use this sort of reasoning as an excuse for 'contacts' with Vorster. One of them is – not surprisingly – Angola's Jonas Sàvimbi. In an interview with the South African *Financial Mail* (May 9, 1975) he bellowed:

> I hope the future leaders of Angola will co-operate with South Africa . . .
> South Africa is an independent country. All the African States agree on that. I have never heard anyone talk in terms of liberating South Africa – not even at the OAU. We are condemning Apartheid – that is a different thing.

First of all, let me explain my position. I fully agree with Lenin, who, in his report of the commission on the national and colonial question to the Second Congress of the Comintern

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*1910 – Act of Union; 1931 – Statute of Westminster providing for Dominion Status; 1961 – promulgation of the present Republic of South Africa.–*Ed.*

(1920) defined the 'cardinal idea underlying our theses' as follows:

> It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasise this distinction.

He then goes on to say:

> This idea of distinction, of dividing the nations into oppressor and oppressed, runs through the theses, not only the first theses published over my signature, but also those submitted by Comrade Roy.
>
> To me, this makes more sense than Stalin's definition.

The author of the article in the series correctly points to the need to make up our minds about the relationship between African nationalism and the different language-cultural groups to which South Africans of all races belong. This relationship will be determined by the acceptance of the fact that:

> history has given the Africans the mission of leading the South African revolution; that Africans should constitute the central theme of our analysis and consideration; that their national liberation (or their struggle for an independent African State) is a precondition for the social and later socialist revolution in South Africa; that after national liberation of the blacks, the question of class and social emancipation of all South Africans, irrespective of race, will come to the forefront more sharply than now.

These questions should be viewed in connection with the question of 'tribes' and 'tribalism' in South Africa. The 'tribes' in South Africa exist because they are useful to apartheid; otherwise capitalism would have long done away with them. In fact, the 'tribes' in South Africa are an integral element of the system. The principle of national 'self-determination' does not apply to them – after all, they are not a subject of international law. But this does not mean that we should 'ignore' or 'neglect' their existence. To me it seems on this, as on many other questions, we will have to follow Lenin's advice, who insisted on 'consistent democracy' as the only way to solve the national question. This is necessary to guard against 'big tribe chauvinism', which rears its ugly head in some sections of the non-proletarian elements from the 'big tribes', who are always eager to 'assimilate' the 'smaller tribes'. What about 'white chauvin-

ism'? Even here, this problem will be solved through 'consistent democracy' with the emphasis on the development of South Africans. This is interconnected with the question of the democratic solution of the land question.

This brings me to the last point: can one honestly talk of a 'South African nation' today? The answer is no. The South African nation is in the process of being born, and we, in the ANC – in an embryonic form – represent the unborn South African nation. The preparations for an actual execution of armed struggle are its birth pangs. That is why I do not understand what Stalin meant by 'stable community' in his definition of a nation.

It seems to me that Stalin's definition of a nation is inadequate to explain the processes now taking place in the Afro-Asian world. Conceived in the pre-October Revolution Europe, Stalin's definition was correct in explaining how bourgeois nations emerged from feudalism in Europe, but needs concretisation in our young Afro-Asian world where nation-building is still in its infancy, taking place during the period of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale; language and cultural heterogeneity is connected with poly-ethnic communities; boundaries are imposed on the people and can be reversed at any time. Stalin's definition seems to have meaning when applied to 'mature' nations in Europe and America, and *not* in Africa, where the process of nation-building is still at its elementary stage. What is our attitude towards the relationship between nation-building and continental unity? Here again we endorse the policy of the African states.

The situation in our country is changing very fast, and if we are not careful we shall be caught napping. There is still time to remedy the situation, and that is through a critical appraisal of our work in propaganda and publicity. We need to have a disciplined discussion on the content, presentation, language, points of emphasis, priorities, etc., of our propaganda and publicity. Again, we will have to follow Lenin's advice of 1905, that is, during the revolutionary upheavals in his country.

"Naturally, here in Geneva, so damnably far away, we find it exceedingly difficult to keep pace with events. But so long as we have to linger at such an accursed distance, we must try to keep pace with events, to sum them up, to draw conclusions, to draw from the experience of today's happenings lessons that will be useful tomorrow in another place, where today 'the people are

still mute' , and where in the near future, in some form or other, a revolutionary conflagration will break out. We must make it the consistent job of publicists to write the history of the present day, and to try to write it in such a way that our chronicles will give the greatest possible help to the direct participants in the movement and to the heroic proletarians there, on the scene of action -- to write it in such a way as to promote the spread of the movement, the conscious selection of the means, ways, and methods of struggle that, with the least expenditure of effort, will yield the most substantial and permanent results."

Yours Comradely,
MAATLA KE A RONA !!!

DEMOCRACY AND REVOLUTION

[On August 6, 1975, an article on the above subject, written by K. Zarodov, D. Sc. (History), was published in the Soviet newspaper *Pravda*. The sub-title of the article was: 'Towards the 70th anniversary of V.I. Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*'. Coming at a time when argument was rife about the question of democracy and dictatorship in the Portuguese revolution, Dr Zarodov's article caused widespread comment in the bourgeois and Communist press, especially in Western Europe, where it was regarded in some circles as an attempt to underline the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the revolutionary process.

We reproduce an abridged version of Dr Zarodov's article as published by the Novosti Press Agency so that our readers may judge for themselves the relevance of Lenin's thinking in relation to the contemporary scene. –Ed.]

In the summer of 1905 Russia was caught in the flames of revolution which brought into action all classes and parties. In keeping with decisions of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, Bolsheviks pursued the line for the further development of the nation-wide struggle against the autocracy and for an armed insurrection. The task of the day was to make this line the buiding motive of all combat action of

the proletariat and rally round it all consistently revolutionary forces, thus defeating the conciliators' guidelines which had disastrous implications for the revolution. It was precisely this task that V.I. Lenin had in mind when he wrote his book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution.*

This work of Lenin's dates back to 1905. But even today, seventy years later, it reads as if its subject was events unfolding before our very eyes. The book is concerned mainly with Russia. But Lenin's conclusions have world-wide implications. Lenin analysed specific revolutionary battles, but his ideas scaled supreme heights of theoretical generalisation. Carrying further the ideas of Marx and Engels, Lenin elaborated the theory of the development of bourgeois-democratic revolution into socialist revolution, a theory which "indicated the only correct way to revolutionary practice", as the CPSU Central Committee points out in its resolution "On the 70th Anniversary of the 1905-1907 Revolution in Russia."

In his work *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* Lenin stated that capitalism had entered a new epoch in its development. This idea was of fundamental importance and was later thoroughly elaborated in his teaching on imperialism as the precursor of socialist transformation of the world. Already in this book Lenin stressed that Europe (which at the time was the most developed part of the capitalist world) had entered a period of political upheavals and revolutions and that the revolutionary epoch advanced new tasks. World development moved to the fore of the epoch the proletariat, not the bourgeoisie. This idea is the core of Lenin's teaching on revolutions in the 20th century.

"The proletariat", wrote V.I. Lenin, "must carry the democratic revolution to completion, allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush the autocracy's resistance by force and paralyse the bourgeoisie's instability. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution, allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population, so as to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance by force and paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie." (V.I. Lenin,

Collected Works, Vol. 9, p. 100).

The hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution was the underlying idea of the new Marxist analysis of the character, motive forces and perspectives of this revolution. This idea gave rise to a number of conclusions whose cardinal importance was borne out by the entire subsequent experience of revolutionary struggle of the Russian and international working class.

Lenin showed above all that the hegemony of the proletariat lends the revolution a truly popular character, because the working class pursues the cause of the whole people, marching in the vanguard of the whole people. The fight for socialism takes such a turn when it involves, as active participants, the broadest masses of the people, besides the working class. In Russia this was due to the fact that the country was the scene of two social wars – against the feudal-monarchal order and against the power of capital. In conditions of imperialism with its tendency towards curtailment of bourgeois freedoms and towards reaction in all spheres, this situation of two social wars – for democracy and for socialism – has become altogether typical. General democratic demands, as was the case in Russia in 1905, mobilise the masses, drawing them into the joint struggle with the proletariat against the domination of exploiters.

The battle for democracy today is the prologue to socialist revolution. That is why it is impermissible to underrate democratic forms of struggle. Lenin points out: "Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of political democracy, will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the economic and the political sense." (Ibid., p.29). This devastating judgement is also applicable to both the Rightists who malign Communists as 'enemies of democracy' and those who play into the hands of reaction by advancing leftist slogans of 'socialism immediately'.

Lenin's further major conclusion is that between the democratic and socialist stages of the revolution in the new epoch there is no barrier, no time interval that revolutionaries should take into account. On the contrary, the two stages have interlocking talks which can be tackled even simultaneously.

This makes for quicker ripening of the prerequisites for socialist revolution, and at the same time requires the party of the proletariat to accurately distinguish and skilfully combine actions dictated by the peculiarities of either stage of the

revolutionary movement, and neither to ignore the necessary transitional stages of struggle, nor to stop on them for too long.

One more proposition of Lenin's conception of revolution is that in the battle for democracy the working class and its party must be constantly guided by the striving to go "far beyond the uttermost limits of the democratic revolution" (Ibid., P.124), whose development into socialist revolution will give rise to new contradictions, the regrouping of class forces and fresh struggle. In our day the Communist and Workers' Parties emphasise that the victory of anti-monopoly democracy can be secured only provided the struggle for it has the clear perspective of ultimately achieving socialism.

The hegemony of the proletariat thus emerges in Lenin's analysis as a factor of continuous, profound and all-round influence of the working class on the development and perspectives of the revolutionary process. It becomes clear that in the current conditions no truly popular revolution is possible without this hegemony. It is exactly the leading role of the proletariat that opens a prospect of victory for the struggle for democracy. It alone makes it possible to bring into action those special levers by dint of which transition is effected from the general democratic to the highest, socialist stage of revolution. In different countries this transition takes place in different ways, depending on specific conditions.

2

Lenin showed – and this too was a new word in Marxism – that an indispensable condition of the victory of a democratic revolution is the establishment of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The class essence of such a dictatorship is determined, according to Lenin, by the fact that it represents the political domination of the working people in a society in whose economic basis capitalist relations have not yet been overcome. The revolutionary nature of this dictatorship consists in that it suppresses reaction's resistance by force and ensures the realisation of the people's democratic demands. Its democratism lies in that it expresses the will and the interests of the working majority of the people and solves the tasks of the democratic

stage of struggle to the maximum. Such a dictatorship is a direct embodiment of the idea of genuine sovereignty of the people, or, as Lenin said, the autocracy of the people, which provides the main lever making possible the transition of the revolution to a socialist stage.

Created by the masses themselves who are active at the grass-roots level, the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in its turn ensures the support and leadership of the movement of these masses 'from above'. This thought of Lenin, grasping the real essence of the phenomena of social development, fully debunks the opportunist concepts still in vogue which suggest that for the proletariat and its party the seizure of the levers of power must be only the final act, the result of a kind of national referendum which alone, so they maintain, can express the will of the majority.

For Lenin and Leninists reliance on popular majority was always the first precept of revolutionary strategy and tactics. But this majority for them is not an arithmetical, but a political concept. They mean a revolutionary majority which obtains not only as a result of the creation of representative, elective bodies of power, but also in the course of direct revolutionary actions by the popular masses, their independent political activity going beyond the routine framework of the established 'peaceful' life consistent with the bourgeois order. Each step in the development of revolution, Lenin stressed, "rouses the masses and attracts them with irresistible force to the side of the revolutionary programme, as the only programme that fully and consistently expresses their real and vital interests" (*Collected Works*, Volume 9, p. 5).

To ensure the possibility for the masses to express their class and political will is the task of a revolutionary government. In the context of the Russia of the summer of 1905 Lenin saw such a government in a Provisional Revolutionary Government, the organ of a victorious popular uprising.

The revolutionary creativity of the masses produced such forms of democracy as the Soviets in our country and people's democracy in the countries of Central and Southeast Europe.

No matter what name a government created by the people bears and with the aid of what forms of struggle it has been established, its task is one – not in words, but in practice, not only by proclaiming slogans, but also by creating the conditions

for their realisation – to ensure through the channels of state power the implementation of the policy of the proletariat, of the working masses.

3

The entire path of revolution, its transition to higher stages of development depend to a decisive degree, taught Lenin, on the level of organisation and ideological and political maturity of the proletariat, that is on the qualities whose embodiment its party is.

One of the main lines of opportunism has always consisted and continues to consist in maintaining that the party of the proletariat should not have its own political position in the general democratic movement. The Russian Mensheviks sought to limit the revolutionary activity of the party, exhorted it to display 'moderation', to lead the 'cultural', unaffecting bourgeois rule, struggle of the proletariat. Only in this way, they asserted, would the party be able to preserve its class independence in the bourgeois revolution and not to frighten away the bourgeoisie itself from this revolution.

The latter-day conciliators do not even pay lip-service to the independence of the proletarian party. They would like to dissolve it in an ideologically amorphous organisation, in any alliance set up according to the formula 'unity for unity's sake'. But their logic is the same as of the Mensheviks. In their view, the very character of the general democratic movement is such that the party of the working class cannot go beyond the limits of demands suiting all its participants, even the most wavering and inconsistent of them. Hence the same exhortations to the Communists to be 'moderate', that is, in the plain political language, to tag behind this movement, rather than march at its head.

In this connection the ideas of Lenin's work *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* remain most pertinent. Lenin showed that the independence of the party of the working class is determined by its ability to go in advance of other social forces and lead them, by how well it will succeed to impress a 'proletarian stamp' on the general democratic revolutionary struggle of the masses. The task of the political vanguard of the working class, pointed out Lenin, is to raise by its slogans

the revolutionary and republican petty bourgeoisie and particularly the peasantry to the level of the consistent democratism of the proletariat.

The Communists were often accused in the past, and so they are now, that for them political agreements with other parties as well as the policy of class alliances are no more than a manoeuvre of expediency. It is enough to read *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, and to compare the ideas of this book with the practical line of the Bolsheviks in the three Russian revolutions, to become convinced that as early as the start of the century Leninism both in theory and in practice proved that it is the proletarian party, and it alone, that is able most honestly, firmly and consistently to wage the struggle for the political and social goals put forward as the platform of united democratic forces.

In the book *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution* Lenin showed the factors by which the vanguard position of the proletarian party in the democratic movement can and must be ensured. They are above all an ability to give a deep appraisal of the existing situation, come up with appropriate initiatives in the interests of the working masses, and adopt correct tactical decisions, which, in Lenin's words, is of enormous importance for a party wanting, in the spirit of the consistent principles of Marxism, to lead the proletariat, and not merely drag behind events. Further, they include an ability to be the most advanced and determined fighters for democracy and at the same time consistently to work for the revolutionary socialist goals of the proletariat and all working people. Finally, an ability to rebuff each and every departure from the principled democratic and revolutionary line.

The revolutionary history of our times has confirmed the viability of Lenin's line in working-class strategy and tactics. The victorious socialist revolutions have proved the complete superiority of this line over Menshevism, Trotskyism and other kinds of Russian and international opportunism. The consistent implementation of this line by Marxist-Leninist parties has allowed the international communist movement to be turned into the most influential political force of our epoch.

Comrade Bram

So long, brave and resolute comrade
Rest assured that we'll fight on
So long comrade Bram, that day will come when cancerous
Apartheid will be gone.

Your existence is ended but dialectically transformed in us,
Tomorrow's struggles and hopes to be shouldered and
implemented by us.
Near and far, multi-coloured readers fix on the buried and
obscure news,
A few moments to adjust, in Jo'burg mourning disguised as
blues.

Over Robben Island, Pretoria, Dimbaza, throughout the land,
will rise liberation's dawn,
Comrade Bram, rest assured in myriad ways, Phambili,
we'll struggle on.
Comrade Bram, you haven't gone to indolent rust,
Your spirit like others steadies and aims Umkhonto's thrust !!

F. Doiron
Uppsala, Sweden

Letter to the Editor

YOUTH AND THE REVOLUTION

From Ben Chaba, member of MK:

The upswing of political and economic anti-apartheid manifestations by the African working class and by black and white students embracing the whole country, causes deep and wide cracks in the draconian structure of white supremacy and fascism. The tempo of development of these significant events is proof that apartheid is no longer capable of containing the growth of social, political and economic actions which come into sharp conflict with the social system.

The youth, students, intelligentsia and scientists join the revolutionary class and the peasantry for the political overthrow of the fascist dictatorship and white supremacy. The close co-operation and solidarity of these social strata with the working class on the basis of mutual interest effects a revolution in the social attitudes of all sections of the people and becomes infectious everywhere. Thus prospects for a bright future are laid.

It is imperative to interlace the student and youth movements with those of peasants and the working class into a mass concerted political force that will demand the overthrow of existing political power and be capable of a seizure of power.

Current political events in Southern Africa have both adverse and positive effects on the South African national democratic liberation front headed by the African National Congress. Political manoeuvres by the South African government weaken the O.A.U. and distract its attention from South Africa.

The main content of detente is to check the revolutionary

activities of Umkhonto, the military wing of the ANC, and thus neutralise the revolutionary struggle of our country. Detente raises confusion within opposition parties, and also the current wave of reformism within the working class unions.

But the new youth movements and their intensely anti-apartheid manifestations, and also the ever-growing working class strike movement are indications of the ripening of a revolutionary situation. However, education and knowledge are necessary for the youth to identify itself with this revolutionary ferment and the political overthrow of fascism and white supremacy.

Education is the theoretical preparation for practice, and practice in turn refines, reorientates and resuscitates theory and education. Thus education and literature become ingredients of socio-politico-economic propaganda.

Education will not dampen the political aspirations of the main social class, nor abolish class contradictions. But it does give a scientific explanation of the cause of social iniquities and injustices and therefore it works towards their destruction. Education and class consciousness help refashion art, literature – all culture – into a revolutionary weapon. This being so, the youth and intelligentsia should give their attention to supporting national talent, and arresting the standardisation of culture. Co-operation of African, Indian, Coloured and white students in the field of culture in our country would open before us boundless perspectives. It would mean personal contact between people who create; it would make possible the exchange of spiritual values between different races of our people, and would thus be one in a common struggle for the preservation of the humanistic heritage.

It is abundantly clear that these progressive ideals – ideals to be cherished – relating to the real dynamic of the youth and education, cannot be realised within the bounds of a racially torn and apartheid order. We therefore make a solemn call upon the youth of all races of our country to unite, to step up their anti-apartheid manifestations, and to take a step further to join in unity the van of the working class and peasantry for the political overthrow of the existing status quo for the freedom of man! You are the moulders of the future! Change lies in your hands!

TIME IS MATERIAL! FREEDOM IN OUR LIFETIME! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

THE AFRICAN COMMUNIST

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